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## The Christian's Royal Survey of his In- measurable Possession.

### A SERMON

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[TRANSLATED BY CLARKE H. IRWIN.]

*Therefore let no man glory in men : for all things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come ; all are yours ; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's.—1 Cor. iii: 21-23.*

"THERE is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing : there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." So must it be when the apostle—a poor man, who lived by the work of his hands—can distribute such treasures. "All are yours." What a word is that "all"! Paul himself feels how inconceivable it must sound to the ears of his readers. Therefore he repeats it, and, as a proof that he speaks with perfect consideration, enumerates in detail the different objects included in the word : Men, the World, Life, Death, the Present and the Future—truly "all things."

And let not any one imagine that the text speaks only of our possession in heaven, where we shall have a part in the dominion over all things. It runs—"are yours"—not "*will be*." It speaks of "things present" as well as of "things to come."

Herod, the King, once promised his stepdaughter that he would give her whatsoever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom (Mark vi : 23). That was a great deal. But how small was that promise of his compared with this of the great Apostle, who does not promise the *half* of a kingdom, but, as if he were the treasurer of the Almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, allots to the Christian the whole world for his possession! "All are yours." Verily, this poor apostle understands how to make rich, as he himself says—"As poor, yet making many rich" (2 Cor. vi : 10).

When Abraham had given that beautiful proof of his humility and contentedness, and had given to Lot the free choice of the land, the Lord said to him: "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever" (Gen. xiii: 14). That was a great grace and goodness on the part of God. Yet that was only a beginning of the promise. How infinitely farther does this promise extend, and how much more does it embrace, which God, for Christ's sake, proclaims by the mouth of the apostle to those who are Abraham's seed of the new covenant! Lift up your eyes and look upon men, upon your teachers, upon the world, upon life in all its seasons, from the fresh morning of youth to the heat of the work at the noon-tide, to the still evening of rest; yea, even to the midnight hours of death, and away beyond into the far future to the light of the eternal city—"all are yours!"

How are we to understand this? The apostle solves for us the enigma—verse 23—"and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's." As certainly as all is God's, and by God committed to Christ, so certainly has he who is Christ's a part in all; and all that is or will be is for Him. By his indissoluble union with the Heavenly Head, to whom all things belong, a share in them all is assured to him also.

As we like, in the lovely days of summer, to climb those hills which afford a distant view, so the apostle leads us with the words of the text to a height from whence we can survey our infinite possession. There the whole world lies at our feet, and it is not said to us, as once was said to Christ by the tempter on a high mountain, "All these things will I give thee;" but, "All are yours, for ye are Christ's."

Let us follow the apostle to this height of faith, and there make *the Christian's royal survey of his immeasurable possession*, in which we observe—

I. ITS KINGLY EXTENT—"All are yours."

II. ITS SACRED LIMIT AND CONDITION—"Ye are Christ's."

And Thou, O Lord Jesus, who for our sakes didst become poor that we through thy poverty might be made rich, teach us Thyself rightly to believe in the greatness and fullness of the blessings which are bestowed on us in Thee, so that we may learn to be ashamed of all faint-hearted, petty care, for we remain so often poor and miserable in our low earthly thoughts, instead of looking over the whole world and being comforted with the belief that all is ours. Free us from ourselves that we may be Thine and Thou ours. For if Thou art ours, how shall not God with Thee freely give us all things. Amen.

I. Hearing the apostle crying, "All are yours," one might



almost exclaim with the Roman governor—"Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad" (Acts xxvi: 24). But for a proof of his perfect soberness, the apostle proceeds to analyze the "all," and in this way causes the astonished gaze of the Christian to roam ever farther and farther over his vast inheritance, until world and time lie far behind, and the sight loses itself in the light of the eternal day. With this unbounded boundary we first see the kingly extent of that possession over which we look around and before us.

He says: "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, whether the world or life or death, whether things present or things to come" (for so we must punctuate and arrange it according to the original Greek)—"all are yours." In these words he bids us behold first the foreground, then the background of our possession.

In the first place, what belongs to Christians? (a) *All their teachers*, be their names Paul or Apollos or Cephas, be they apostles or disciples of the apostles, planters and founders like Paul and Peter, or waterers and successors in the Gospel work like Apollos; whether those who personally work in a flock, as Paul and Apollos at Corinth, or absent ones, whose testimony and activity remote congregations nevertheless profit by, as Corinth did by that of Peter; plain but penetrating apostles, full of the Spirit, or orators of scientific and literary culture, like Apollos. Instead of splitting themselves up into fractions after the individual teachers, and wrangling, "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas," as if Christ were divided (1 Cor. i. 11-13), the Corinthians are to remember that Christ alone was crucified for them, that He alone is their Lord and Saviour, and that they are all baptized in His name; are not to glory in any man, not even the most brilliant orator, the greatest scholar or the wisest sage, because the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God, and neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but God alone, who gives the increase. "Therefore let no man glory in man. For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas." Why do ye strive about us, and depend on our poor human names, we who are only God's helpers and servants (v. 9)? Rather rejoice we are all yours, the absent as well as the present! To you belong all our works, all our spiritual gifts and powers, all our knowledge, preaching and doing, our struggles and sufferings, our prayers and tears, all our life of faith and all its fruit. In truth, even this first part, all the apostolical power and the testimonies of their teachers, was no mean possession for the early Christian community, but a rich well of truth and blessing, an unceasing summons to united, grateful joy, not to the jealous wranglings of party strife.

And if this even then were no small thing, now infinitely

more has arisen out of it. Yes, O Christian, to you also belong all those who work for you. You reap the fruit of their faith, of their testimony, of their prayers, of their studies and of their zeal for souls. And that, too, is no small possession when you see around you so many sheep without a shepherd. But not merely those directly present or still living, not only your immediate teachers and preachers, but all Christian teachers, all preachers, are yours. You can build yourself up by their writings, by their example, by their faith; yes, for you also they have lived, and worked, and still are working. Many of whom you know and of whom you have learned nothing have also helped to build up the kingdom of Christ, so that it might come to us also. Yours are all the prophets and apostles; yours is this same Paul who, in the words that I have read, preaches to you today; yours are all the Christian martyrs who, not only with their words, but with their blood, preach and exhort to faithfulness; yours the pious fathers of the Church, with all their treasures of knowledge and experience, whether of Paul, or of Apollos, or of Cephas; yours the Reformers, with the bright shield of their faith and the sharp sword of their thought and word; yours not only all the prayers and exhortations and blessings of pious parents and forefathers, but all the men of God in every age, who still are ever witnessing and struggling; yours the faith and love of all the children of God, with all their channels of blessing; yours the whole of Scripture, and all who interpret it; for you share in the enjoyment of the fruit of their believing toil, and of all the work of a thousand years in the kingdom of God. Yes, yours is the whole Church of Christ, as she was and is and shall be, because for you she is, and for you she ripens to perfection; yours are the countless words spoken on Sabbath and on week days to the glory of God and of Christ, all the thousands of sermons in hundreds of tongues; yours, too, every prayer, every aspiration of faith, every devotional meditation and self-uplifting of a soul to God; for all are working together for your joy, for the coming of that kingdom of which you are an heir. As a Christian, you are a link of that great chain of united thought and faith which was founded by Christ, the Head of the whole body, the Teacher of all who teach, and continues through all time—that faith whose streams of blessing trickle ever farther over the whole earth. He who drinks divine life from this stream is by all invisibly nourished and maintained, and shall in turn help all; whatever happened and happens in this whole circle happens for him also.

Verily, it is no small property into possession of which thou hast come, O Christian! And let him among you who lives in a place where many enlightened teachers are spreading the light of the only saving truth, or him who may be preparing himself for the teacher's office in a seat of learning, where the



great mass of the whole intellectual possessions of mankind and of Christianity, with all their prominent teachers, is piled as in a storehouse, and made accessible by the perseverance of many teachers—let him reflect on his great possession, and recognize therein his greater responsibility. The manifold treasures of Christian knowledge are yours; you can make them serviceable to you; then use them also for your salvation!

Wherever you are, dear evangelical Christians, look at your great possession in men and in teachers, and cast over all looks, not of petty jealousy, but kingly, victorious and thankful. Why strive so much over human names, whether of Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, whether of Luther, or Calvin, or Wesley—let no one glory in man! All are yours—try all, learn from them all, make use of all, and let their manifold gifts and the fruits of their labors help you to the good fight of faith.

(b) But let thy gaze roam still wider, dear brother! Men are not nearly thy whole possession. The apostle continues—“whether the world, or life, or death.”

*The world?* Bold word; from one then so much persecuted, scourged and thrust out by the world! Bold word, in a time when so small a portion of the world was subject to Christ! and yet quite true, even in respect to the external world. Was not dominion over the world given to man at the very beginning? And shall not so much of that as was lost through sin be restored through the redemption in Christ Jesus? The Christian, as a saved one, as a member of Christ, who has put all things under His feet, is called to rule over the world. But the world is in so far created particularly for the children of God as it is to serve for the glory of God, and this glory is given Him by His children alone. The Spirit of God which is communicated to them is a power which at last all things must obey. “The meek shall inherit the earth,” and by faith they can even now already regard it as their inheritance and possession, until the time that the promise is fulfilled. “And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom” (Daniel vii. 27).

But of each separate part of our possession, and especially of this one, let us not forget that it is called “yours.” Not to one alone, but to all you who are Christians together, does the world belong. Yours is the whole of Nature, in all her strength and beauty, her wrestling and suffering; for you alone, as Christians, with grateful eyes uplifted to her Creator, with humble consideration of sin and the corruption of death, with joyous looking forward to the perfection of the eternal glory, can rightly understand and enjoy her. Yours is the world, for you alone reflect on its perishable nature, and are taught by the

Spirit of Christ to use it right as not abusing it (1 Cor. vii: 31); yours are all men in the world, because for him who loves men in Christ Jesus they all are really working, for all their work is used of God for the holy aims of His kingdom, that is, *for you*; yours are all the beautiful and noble productions of the mind and fruits of life in this world of men. Whatever really great has been accomplished in science and art, in deeds and sufferings; whatever serves to the honor of God, and has, therefore, an enduring worth; yes, entirely yours is the whole history of the world, for the world's history also in all its parts must work together to the building up of the kingdom of God.

Yours, moreover, in an especial sense, is all that is enduring in this ever-rolling world—that is, all that God placed in this world to reveal Himself and to declare His glory, and executed in it for the happiness of men—from that inner self-moving of the Godhead, from which the words, “Let there be light,” arose, up to the rising of the Easter sun after Golgotha’s darkness and the illumination of the Pentecostal morning; all deeds and words of God in the old and in the new covenant; yours above all is Christ, the great turning-point of all time, and with Him all the ages, and all the divine providence exhibited in them. Yours, O Christian, is His holy incarnation and birth, His poverty and His wealth, His lowliness and His glory; yours is His obedience unto death, all His doing and all His submitting, His sufferings and His victory, every pearl of truth from His mouth, every drop of blood from His bruised body, every act of His rule in the world; all are as much yours to use and to enjoy as if for you especially they had happened and existed. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up to the death for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. viii: 32.)

But look still further onward over this world. Yours are also *life and death*—not merely your own life, the basis of all your possession, the whole “talent” of time, and health, and wealth entrusted to you by God, all the present ways and thousandfold opportunities of doing good; but if Christ is yours, who is Life itself, then is all life, all that is really living, yours indeed; all the productive powers in the kingdom of *nature* (for they act and produce to the glory of God your Father, therefore also for you and your future); and much more all the life-giving forces in the kingdom of *grace*; the complete fulness of the spiritual life which appeared in Christ; all the workings of the Holy Spirit in countless hearts; every enlightening, every conversion, every progress in holiness, wherever attained, if even in the farthest corner of the earth; for all work together to the perfecting of the kingdom which is reserved for you, to your joy, to the strengthening of your faith and to your perfect happiness. And, therefore, yours is also the eternal life



in the kingdom of *glory*, where the streams of life well up in free, unhindered power, and its fruits, no longer threatened by any enemy, display themselves continually.

Yes, even *Death*, too, is yours! Because Christ's death is yours, your own death must also be a good service to you—an entrance into life, a bridge across to glory. Yours are the sweet and happy deaths of all the pious, the martyrs' deaths of witnessing, with all their comfort, all their fruit. Not only all the powers of life, nay, even all the destructive forces that are in the world, are yours also, O Christians, for the wise guidance of God uses them also for its holy aims—even all they, from sorrow and sickness to the mouldering of the grave, are in God's hand a means of preparing you for the kingdom of glory. Nay, even life and death are, in a certain sense, in your hands; you can spread life or corruption; you can be to the world a blessing or a curse. All is yours; with yourselves rests the choice; shall it be Life or Death?

(c) Still further does the apostle lead the ravished eye of the Christian, who now surveys his immeasurable possession as far as the last conceivable limit, as far as the remotest distance; he says—"things present, or things to come—all are yours." Not only the present, with all that lives and ferments in it, but also all that develops itself from it—the whole future, nearer or more distant, with all that it brings of happiness or woe. And wherefore this? Because to those who love God all things must be for the best. He who has obtained the salvation of Christ obtains all things. To him I would say in words of comfort—Thine are not only all the former and present, but also all the future actions of God and Christ; thine the coming fall of Babylon, the overthrow of Satan, the resurrection and the judgment, the new heaven and the new earth; thine all the promises, and therefore, also, their glorious fulfilment; thine all the battles, and therefore, also, the coming final one between light and darkness, and the mighty victory of light, eternal peace, the unending rest of the people of God! Thine are the angels and all the blessed in the New Jerusalem; thine all the glory of God and Christ in the world of light; for thee shine all the stars in this life and the next; for thee all fountains flow; for thee all hands are working, and for thee all hearts beat; for thee are rising the enduring mansions of the heavenly home.

Truly a kingly survey of endless distance over a possession immeasurable on this side and on that! As when looking from a high mountain over the scenes of earth, our sight finally roams away to the verge of the horizon, where earth and heaven are blended in the light of the evening sun, so our spiritual vision of our possession first finds the limits of its power where the long stream of history pours itself into the eternal ocean,

where present and future, earth and heaven, all together end in the golden streets of the New Jerusalem. Thither, O Christian, extends thy kingdom, and there it first in reality has its true beginning!

Oh, that such a survey—to which also our Lord and Saviour often enough invites us when He exhorts us to seek first the kingdom of God and all things shall be added unto us, or when, surveying and grouping together all things, He teaches us to pray, “Thy kingdom come”—were more frequent among us, and that we also learned by meditating on it to live more as kings and priests to God, and to overcome all that is base within us! Why are we not every day joyful over these treasures? Why?

II. Far as this survey of ours reaches, it has yet a *holy limit and condition*, with which all is connected: “*And ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's*.” All, yes, *all* is yours, O Christian, but with one exception—*yourself*—*you are not your own*, but are the property of Christ. This is the near-lying limit, but also the real basis of our immeasurable possession. It is only if we are really Christ's that He and His kingdom are ours, and on Him and His kingdom all things depend—Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and all pious teachers and pastors, for what they preach is Christ (1 Cor. i: 2, 3; 2 Cor. iv: 5); without Him they are nothing (1 Cor. ii: 7); in Christ they are all one; therefore, he alone who is Christ's and has Christ has them all. The world, life and death, the present and the future, all depend on Christ. For who can give us the right of possession over all things? Surely only He to whom all things belong, that is, God. But God has delivered all things over to Christ (Matt. xi: 27). “Christ is God's,” inseparable from the Father in being, power and will, and He gives all things to them who are and who remain His, inseparably His own in faith and love. With Christ, and in Christ alone the Father and His kingdom are also theirs, and therefore in truth all things. So that it is only because and if Christ is ours that all things are ours; but Christ is ours only if we are Christ's. For how could He give a part in His life and in Himself to him who does not open to Him the door? How could he dwell in one that does not give himself to Him that He may purify him and make him a new creature?

We see, therefore, that the possession of the “all things” is connected with the sacred condition: *only when Christ possesses you do you possess Him, and with Him all things*. If you will be your own master, and be careful for self, you have nothing to expect; but if you give yourself up to Christ, then are, and evermore shall be, all things thine. He alone who no longer is his own, who through the new-creating power of the grace and of the Spirit of Christ is each day more completely



purging out the selfishness of the old man, and who ceases wishing to be and to have anything for himself—he in this new love for God and His kingdom, a love that is all-embracing, that in Christ makes all things again serviceable to himself, has the whole wealth of God Himself to enjoy. He whose eye is clear, whose heart is so far formed in love of God and Christ as to be able to embrace at once the present and the future, as in faith and hope to possess all things as an heir, he alone can and may see such a royal vision. The apparent loss of his own self will be his greatest gain. He loses only the petty, the base, the low, the selfish that adheres to him; but from the moment that he conquers self and gives self up to Christ, there sinks with the grace and love of Christ into the hitherto narrow heart, that in its selfishness never reached beyond itself, a God-given power of self-expansion, a heavenly disposition that looks far away beyond all things earthly, through which that heart becomes capable of sharing in the possession and enjoyment of all things in faith, because it has already attained the firmly-rooted hope of the eternal inheritance, and has become a living member of Christ the Head, who is already in possession of, and ruling over, all things. He alone, therefore, who, with himself, gives up all, even to the smallest remnant, of the natural man, and lets the new-creating beam of divine light and life penetrate into the innermost depth of his being, receives the expectancy of all things.

This solemn condition, then, puts to us a *decisive* question—*Whose art thou—Christ's or thine own?* And of him, to whom it, nevertheless, may seem a little too much to give himself up to another, I would ask—Do you know that of right you belong, not at all to yourself, but to Him by whom all things, yourself included, have been created, and who has bought you for His possession with His precious blood? Can you deny His sacred title to you? And thou who believest that thou hast given thyself long ago to Christ, art thou in truth as *fully* the property of Christ as *Christ is God's*? Art thou in such a constant and uninterrupted intercourse of life and love, of will and deed? Is it so between thee and thy Saviour as between Him and His Father? Hast thou, in thy self-surrender to him, kept back nothing of self, made no little secret provision for the world and the flesh? Canst thou call “His” thy whole time, strength and wealth, thy whole heart—in one word, *thyself*? Dost thou do all things with Him, in Him, for Him? In all thy seasons of action and of rest are the words imprinted on thy soul—“I must not ‘live to myself, but to Him who has died for me and risen again’?” (2 Cor. v: 15.) Oh, what a task, to be Christ's and continue Christ's in spite of all that daily and hourly comes to separate us from Him! No wonder that in the case of most people the sight is immedi-

ately dimmed by dark shadows when they try to take this royal survey of their great possession.

But consider not only the great and unceasing task which, so long as we wander in this body of sin and death, lies for us in the words, "Ye are Christ's," but also their *comforting aspect*. If the Lord will have you fully and completely, He must have you with all your misery, with all your sin, with all your outward and inward needs and cares. These were not wanting among the Corinthians also, and yet Paul writes of them, "Ye are Christ's," because they had surrendered themselves with all their sins to the Master. Oh, beloved soul, learn from this, then, this great comfort: He will have thee thus, just as thou art, fully and just now, even though He knows thy vilenesses better than thou knowest them thyself. Do not wait to see if thou canst become better and make a fairer appearance. Thou canst never be so without Him, and every hour that thou keepest back from Him is something stolen from His dearly-acquired possession, is a new guilt. Go to Him, and say: Lord, I have heard that Thou wilt have me, yea, that for my sake Thou hast taken upon Thyself pain and sorrow inconceivably great—here Thou hast me for Thyself, with all my wickedness, all my guilt and all my weakness!

Oh, beloved soul, as sure as God is God and His Word the Truth, so surely to-day does He offer to thee again a Gospel which by Christ's command is to be preached to every lost creature. He will accept of thee and give Himself to thee as thine own. And having Him you have all things; you are one of the King's children and an heir to the unfading crown, and it is your privilege, the more fully you are His, to give up to Him all that oppresses and grieves you.

But thou that hast Him not, look at *the other side* of the truth, of which the apostle reminds us to-day. While all is yours only if and in so far as you are Christ's, *you have nothing, nothing at all, if you do not belong to Him*. Am I saying perhaps too much? Oh no! not yet enough. Thou hast worse than nothing, deep guilt!

If all things, including you, have been delivered to Christ of His Father, then you, with all you are and have, live on His goods and possessions, over which you are placed here only as steward, not as owner. If you remain your own, and use that which is entrusted to you as your own, instead of for your Master's purposes, then you are wasting His goods as a wicked steward, and heaping guilt upon guilt. Every minute which you appropriate as your own, instead of using it in Him and for Him, is a theft; every beating of the heart which does not belong to Him is a crime, and your whole self-glory a long register of guilt which accuses you.

Oh! how miserably poor is the Christless world, which seeks



to belong not to Him, but to itself! If it will look over its possessions, it must draw back its gaze ever farther. To it belongs not the future, for this brings to it only death and judgment, and it has no hope of the eternal life; not the present, for this not only melts away under its hands, but is taken possession of by another, who leads it to quite other ends than the world dreams of; not death, for *this* has the world, and not the world *it*, and lets it only once pass from the first to the second and eternal death; not life, for it knows not at all what is called life; because it has not Him who is Life itself, it knows neither life's true task nor its genuine joy, and its whole life-work can show nothing which is permanent and which would make its poor life really worth the living; not Paul, not Apollos, not Cephas, not one God-sent teacher of the truth, because their testimony does not exist for the world which despises and rejects it, and their word of life becomes unto it only a savor of death unto death. Nay, not even *the world*. Not even this last thing still remaining to it does the world have and hold; for, because it of right belongs to another whose service it withdraws to itself, He punishes it by letting it always destroy itself more and more of itself, and it loses itself ever deeper till the last faint ray of life and pleasure, of honor and of joy, of time and strength, is forever extinguished beyond recall.

Therefore, dear brethren,—either *with* Him and having all things, or *without* Him and having nothing, nay, less than nothing, immeasurable guilt against Him who has all things—that is the choice! Oh! since it is often hard to tear yourselves away from the world, which tires itself in the pursuit after an imaginary possession, learn as Christians untiringly to regard this world in the light of these kingly words, “All is yours;” and let the royal sentiment, the unending consciousness of elevation, that arises out of it, chase away all petty cares and debased desires. But along with that, attend each day to the solemn self-examination: Am I also Christ's? He alone who has received, with the Spirit, the seal of sonship to God, and is ever diligent in deep humility and earnest watchfulness not to grieve this Holy Spirit, he is and remains an heir to the kingdom, and can in truth follow with his gaze the apostle's survey of his immeasurable possession. He receives all things—*here* in faith, love and hope, *there* in seeing and enjoying—from Him who says, “And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me” (Luke xxii: 29).



## The Creative Energy in Nature and in Grace.

### A SERMON

By Pharcellus Church, D.D., TARRYTOWN, N. Y.

*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.—Psalms xxxiii: 6.*

*These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.—Rev. iii: 14.*

*Who hath created all things by Jesus Christ.—Eph. iii: 9.*

*I have created him (Jacob), I have formed him; yea, I have made him.—Isaiah xliii: 7.*

*We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—Eph. ii: 10.*

*Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered; nor come into mind.—Isaiah lxv: 17.*

WE have in these passages the leading features of God's work in creation as revealed in Scripture; and we trust that we shall make it clear that it is as remote as heaven from earth from anything that science is able to reach by its methods. In doing this we shall outline our text, and then speak of the creative energy in itself, in its working, in its unity, and in its final cause or consummation.

#### I. WE ARE TO OUTLINE OUR TEXT.

1. The passages of the text seem to vibrate between a literal and spiritual meaning. The dress of the thought is literal, but the body or substance is clearly spiritual. Our first impression of the heavens and their host is, that they relate to the material expanse above us with its shining worlds; but when it is said in the same connection (Psalms xxxiii: 13) that "the Lord looked down from heaven," we know that the spiritual universe must be in view. The Amen as God's faithful and true witness, and Jacob or Israel as a representative people, are also necessarily spiritual. So the creation of Christian believers is their birth of the Spirit to a new and holy life, and the new heavens and earth cannot refer to the solid frame-work of nature, but only to a divine and heavenly order of things. Hence, whatever is literal in these passages is, like written or spoken language, a mere organ of expression to what is of thought, to what is of mind, to what is of the spiritual world.

2. As the creation is spiritual, so is the energy that produced it. This energy is spoken of as the Word or Breath of God, and as Jesus Christ. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all their host by His breath, or, which is the same thing, God created all things by Jesus Christ. The terms are different, but the meaning the same. As creation is a thing of time and space, so must be the energy producing it. How can



the Infinite and Eternal be compressed into time and space relations, or into conditions of limitation, without in some way accommodating Himself to these assumed conditions? And the terms Word and Breath of God and God in Christ are applied in Scripture to the Infinite acting in space and to the Eternal in time, and hence in the same chapter it is recorded that "no man can see God and live," and that "God spake to Moses face to face" (Exod. xxxiii : 11, 20). "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John i : 18). It is the same God, as, revealed or unrevealed, His Word or Breath in creating and ordering material nature is dimly seen; but in Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, divinity irradiates the attributes of humanity, and becomes "the light" of conscience and of immortality "to every man that cometh into the world" (John i : 9). Heaven and earth, or God and man as a unit, is thus the fundamental truth of revealed religion.

3. The *work* which the Bible describes God as doing is also spiritual. It consists in making an earthly being heavenly, and an evil and fallen one good and holy. This is clearly implied in the text, "I have created Jacob, I have formed him; yea, I have made him," that is, created him as a spiritual race, really or representatively, in reference to which it is said of those in Christ, that they are God's "workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Their divine and heavenly life is not a natural development, but a direct creation from God.

4. Even the *beginning* spoken of in the text, has no reference to the material universe, but to the revelation of God in Christ, or, with the limitations of time and space. Christ as "the Amen, the faithful and true witness," in revealing the invisible God is, "*the beginning* of the creation of God." The first movement of the Infinite from His own eternity, was in taking on forms of existence to make Himself known. He became the Amen or Truth, witnessing His existence to beings capable of apprehending Him, and herein *began* the only order of things of which the Bible treats. The beginning was not that of calling up the material universe from nothing, as is generally supposed, but that of God acting with the limitations implied in his identity with the "Son whom He appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds." The "all things" and "the worlds" refer to that system of things of which "Christ is the head to his church" (Eph. i : 22), or which he manages with a view to inclining men to a spiritual, holy and divine life. Such passages in the Bible, as also its whole scheme of revealed truth, have no reference to the material creation, except as the base of God's spiritual workmanship here below. Its beginning dates from God's attitude as



and with limitations. Rev. i : 8, xxi : 6; Prov. viii : 23; Col. i : 18.

5. *Foreordination* is not the abstraction of a purpose in God's mind, but the concrete fact of a plan to induce men to the practice of good works. It is indeed several times spoken of as an outcoming of what was "*before* the foundation of the world" (John xvii : 24, Eph. i : 4, 1 Peter i : 20), but this accords to the whole Bible, which traces the known to the unknown, and the things of time to their origin in eternity. It *assumes* the eternal, however, not as a thing to be proved, but as a fixed fact of human consciousness. This assumption we have in its first verse, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"; and it asserts that it is "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God" (Heb. xi : 3), thus offering no proof for the greatest of all facts, because it needs none, any more than the fact of our own existence. That we exist and that God exists are prior conditions of thought; so, while foreordination to a good life is known to us only in the workmanship by which we are made good through the Word, the Spirit, Providence, and the whole course of ordinances and instrumentalities from the beginning of time, yet it is the outcoming of what was in the Infinite mind before the foundation of the world. Such are the leading ideas in our text.

## II. THE CREATIVE ENERGY IN ITSELF.

Our creeds and catechisms *infer* that the world was made of nothing, because we know not what it was made out of in the beginning. The Bible asserts nothing of the kind, but only that God made it. The apostle is more cautious in his statement of the case as already quoted. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The non-appearance of things to us is no evidence that they do not exist. The great forces of nature—gravitation, magnetism, electricity and so on—appear only in their effects, and yet are they not as real as rocks, mountains or the visible worlds? Creating the universe out of things that do not appear is by no means the same as making them out of nothing. *What* God made we to some extent see, but how He made it, or of what, doth not appear. These are questions for science to solve, if it can. In saying that by *faith* we understand that God made the worlds, the apostle withdraws the subject from the reasoning of those who make matter eternal. Whatever may be said or thought of the faith which sees God in the origin or operations of nature, it certainly does not come from a process of reasoning. We no more reason ourselves into the consciousness of a Divine creative energy, than into the sense



of the ought or ought not. The child feels this sense before he begins to reason, and as soon as he begins to feel it, the sense of a God to approve or disapprove what he does dimly but really dawns upon his mind. Is not this spiritual feeling or insight the first germ of the faith by which we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God? Apart from it, can men by wisdom or by mere reasoning know God? 1 Cor. i:21. Is it not the end of creation to multiply beings with this insight to know, enjoy and glorify God forever?

In thinking of God in creation, how liable are we to the illusions of sense and imagination! In looking upon mountain scenery, or listening to the roar of Niagara, we seem to stand face to face with God, and feel that "the undevout astronomer is mad." Whereas, what we see and hear is most of all remote from the energy which creates. It is, as it were, the nail parings, which have in them none of the life from which they come. The astronomer is undevout, because the material immensity which he contemplates kindles his imagination without increasing his faith. He reasons of God, but he does not feel the sense of His presence in taking cognizance of his own right or wrong. The still small voice by which God speaks to the believing soul is not a thing of poetry and imagination; it is a great reality of our moral being. The medium through which we see God is spiritual, moral, immortal, and not one of sentiment and imagination. "Nature *conceals* God, man *reveals* Him." See Sir W. Hamilton's *Metaphysics*, p. 29.

God's work is not to be estimated by its *ponderosity*, but by its *directness*. Which is the greater creation, the life or the organism which it takes on? Which is most direct in its emanation from God? Science can put the organism into its crucible and analyze it to its elements, but the life that made the organism escapes it. That is from God, who is life in Himself. When the life-germ is created, the product is ensured. And it is the same, whether each germ is a separate creation or is propagated, since the generations going before reach a first germ coming direct from God. Which is the greater of the two, the fall and roar of Niagara, or the solar heat and gravitation which produce them? Without that heat, water would be fixed as a rock; and without that gravitation, it could not fall. And yet, who that looks at Niagara feels the sublimity of the real forces which produce the mighty movement? The rocks, the roar and the rushing current in its vastness kindle the imagination, and become a sort of veil to hide from view its real forces. Is not science interposing a like veil to the knowledge of God? Those who are devoted to it talk of ethereal waves as the cause of astral motion, talk of molecular polarity as producing all the forms of matter, talk of the order and energy of the universe as inherent and not imposed from

without ; and yet these forces, real or unreal, are as much out of the range of their methods as the God who is Spirit. The Bible resolves all into mind-force, working all in all. Which is the more reasonable of the two? Plato, in ascribing all the forms of things to a guiding intelligence, came much nearer the Scripture idea than the scientists of our day.

The Hebrew and Greek words rendered *create* in our translation are used more than a hundred times in the Old and New Testaments. They have a stronger meaning than the words rendered form, make, build, frame, as in the text *creating* Jacob means more than *forming* and *making* him. The first denotes perhaps the impartation of a germ of Spiritual life, while the others relate more especially to its cultivation.

In the secular use of these words I cannot see much difference ; but as applied to God and His working, create means much more than form, make, build, frame ; and in this view I find a general agreement among commentators and lexicographers.

The difference is like that between the subtler and grosser forms of matter. Gravitation, sunlight, electricity and magnetism shape rocks, rivers, mountains, oceans, while life gives being to innumerable organisms ; and yet they are subtle, and, to a great extent, unseen forces, while what proceeds from them is vast, ponderous, and occupy almost our sole attention. So, in the Scripture phraseology, the creative energy is, as it were, a subtle, unseen force, or a life-germ proceeding directly from the Creator, and from it come all existing things, by formation, making, building, framing. Thus, miracles are *created*, and their *results* are formative. Of the opening of the earth to swallow up Korah and his company, God says, "I will create a creation" (Num. xvi : 30) —that is, an extraordinary thing aside from my established laws of cause and effect. "I will create a new thing," our translators render it, but this fails to express what the passage means. Its meaning is, that an event with no intermediate cause between it and God's agency is a creation. The directness of its emanation from God, not its ponderosity, is what makes it a creation. Its cultus is a thing of means, and therefore formative.

So, in other passages of the Bible, a like distinction is kept up between the created and the formed or made. "The miracles of God's dealing with Israel are such as have not been created in all the earth, nor in any nation" (Ex. xxxiv : 10). This implies a directness in God's working among that people which does not appear in the order of nature. "They are created now, and not from the beginning" (Isa. xlviii : 7), is also a reference to the things of prophecy, including no doubt the gospel day, which was without precedent. The Divine Incarnation in the person of Christ was the great burden of



prophecy, an event foreshadowed in man's creation after God's image and likeness and by various types, none of which, however, were precedents of the stupendous reality. That stands out singly and alone on the tablet of prophecy as a direct manifestation of God among men, and hence is spoken of as a "creation now, and not from the beginning." In like manner the same event is alluded to in the much misunderstood passage, "The Lord shall create a new thing; a woman shall encircle a man," that is, in the sense of protecting him, alluding no doubt to our Lord in the womb and arms of the Virgin (Jer. xxxiv : 22). This was the greatest of all wonders and without precedent in the history of the universe. "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i : 35).

Such is creation in its highest sense. The typical foreshadowing of it in the account of man's creation represents him as endowed with moral faculties kindred to those of the Divine. They are a creation because inbreathed directly from God, and not a development from his lower nature. The mineral, vegetable and animal substances of his body cannot make him spiritual. Nor, indeed, can the intellectual faculties which in him answer to instinct in animals. A blind man could as well reason himself into seeing as we could exercise ourselves in religion, with no sense to take the impressions of God, duty and immortality. This sense is, in the Bible view, a creation, or a direct emanation from God, and does not come from cultivation or development. Can we be cultivated up to a sixth sense, or a dog be trained to reason and feel as a man? Can reasoning rest on premises which are beyond the scope of our own nature? We call this special creation in man conscience, a word which is not in the Old Testament, and which in the New is spoken of as a light from the Divine Incarnation, "lighting every man that cometh into the world" (John i : 9).

Creation, as applied to nature, has respect to those subtle laws of matter or life which we can know only as their effects; and in mind it is that which made our race capable of a spiritual, moral and immortal life. But inasmuch as this spiritual creation in man came at the fall under the ruling of the flesh, the world and the devil, and thus failed of its purpose, a new creation became necessary, spoken of as "in Christ unto good works," "making all things new," "a new heaven and a new earth," and this new product of creative energy is called "a new creature." (2 Cor. v : 17; Rom. viii : 19-23; Gal. vi : 15; Col. i : 15; Rev. v : 13.)

When one thus looks at the creative energy in itself, as presented in the Word of God, the absurdity of attempting to adjust it to any of the scientific theories of nature, its origin or

formation, must be clearly seen. I am afraid our Christian scientists, by their perversions of Scripture, are doing more mischief to the cause of revealed religion than our Spinozas, our Comtes, or any of the materialistic school.

### III. THE CREATIVE ENERGY IN ITS WORKING.

However direct God's act in creating, it links itself to a series of succeeding acts, which we call means, stages, generations. Each one in the series seems to come from some inherent power in that which went before, and our later materialists deny the existence of anything independent of matter. Matter created itself or is eternal, and matter is the sole cause of subsequent changes. Hence, in their view, there is no intelligence in its working, no design by which the mechanism of the eye is adjusted to light, the ear to sounds, the earth to the sun and the sun to the earth, and by which the vast machinery of nature is made to work in harmony. All is blind-force, in their view, which is the uncaused cause of all things.

There is mystery, no doubt, in this subject of causation; but this material explanation, it seems to me, is least of all satisfactory. Is it not more reasonable to ascribe the first movement to an Infinite Intelligence, in whom all causes meet as the first link in the chain—a chain of which He never lets go,—so that the present forces of nature owe their existence to a present God as much as that by which the series was begun? "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things," and "in Him we live and move and have our being." Though the part of the process in which means are employed is spoken of in the text as formative, and only the first act was creative, yet God is alike present to all and in all. "*I have created, I have formed, I have made,*" are words which ascribe the secondary as well as the primary act to God, only distinguishing between the two according to the directness or indirectness of the emanation. The direct is spoken of as miraculous, while the other comes by means and in the order of nature—or so it seems from our limited point of observation; when in fact perhaps what we call miracles would be seen to come from more general laws in God's working if we could take in his whole plan.

Unhappily we have fallen into a state so animal and material that we are under a constant illusion in looking upon what is going on around us. We see eggs becoming birds, acorns oaks, generations springing from those going before, and on all hands one thing beginning on another, and we are deluded into the feeling that the movement is self-impelled. "Therefore they sacrifice unto their net and burn incense unto their drag: because by *these* their portion is fat and their meat plenteous." We forget that what we see is the least part even of nature, and is only the dial covering from view God's real clock-work in keeping up the mighty movement.



"Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of Him! but the thunder of His power who can understand?"

The Bible is given to cure us of this illusion, not by reasoning, but by appealing to God's responsive chords in our own moral nature. In its first chapter it assumes two things: first, that God is the Creator of all things; and second, that we are made in His image, involving a necessary recognition of Him in His true character, or in some perverted form or god of our own. And whatever else its subsequent chapters contain or omit, the working of a present God is sure to be their leading idea.

"Philosophy baptized  
In the pure fountain of eternal love  
Has eyes indeed; and viewing all she sees  
As meant to indicate a God to man."

With such eyes our Lord looked upon the birds and lilies, and ascribed His own mighty deeds, not to Himself, but to His Father.

Not a few mistake our "creation in Christ unto good works" as the language of simile rather than of fact. They set forth eloquently the production of the material universe from nothing as the only real creation, but used to illustrate the greatness of regeneration. But wherein does God act more directly than in the human soul? The subtlest forms of matter are remote from the spirituality of His being, compared with souls created in His own image. What He does in making us holy like Himself and heirs of His blessed immortality, is far more a creation than piling up rocks and mountains, or peopling immensity with its worlds. Is not the child of a house a higher production than the house itself? It is within us that God has His temple and His throne, and that he performs His greatest acts, because they produce gems out of which the spirits of just men made perfect are brought into an ever-expanding life of glory and blessedness.

It is from such a creation that the greatest results follow even on earth. Think of what ensued from the regeneration of him who was the Apostle to the Gentiles. In that the Christianity of Europe had its seeding. Think of the mighty results which flowed from Luther's conversion. In that our modern civilization had its birth. Think, in fact, of a work in the feeblest and least known believer ending in his glorification in heaven, and who will not say that it is far more to the praise of creative energy than the construction and ordering of material nature? When God says, "I have created, I have formed, I have made," "I create a new heaven and a new earth," he gives assurance not only of his continual working, but of the genuineness of his workmanship, and that a piety

which consists in a creation in Christ unto good works cannot fail to bless the world with its fruits and to fill heaven with redeemed spirits. This is "the incorruptible seed of the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." All else in the form of moral reasoning, ceremonial observance or priestly imposition is unavailing and unenduring. It is God Himself on His holy hill of Zion that perpetuates in the earth all that is true in religion, genuine in virtue and tranquilizing to the soul, just as it is a continual divine energy in nature that keeps in motion its innumerable wheels and gives them a beneficent direction.

#### IV. THE CREATIVE ENERGY IN ITS UNITY.

An endless variety of parts in one is a strong feature in my text. The heavens and their host are a unit of creative power; God's workmanship in the millions on earth and in heaven makes them one family, of which Christ is Head; Jacob, or the Israel of God, with its countless host, is spoken of as an individual; the all things created by Christ are His new heavens and earth, his new Jerusalem, or consummated work.

What is it that makes nature one vast system of things but the identity of its laws? All the forms of matter are reducible to a few simple elements, and the orbs move in harmony under the same impulse, and are found by means of the spectroscope to be composed of like materials. Is not this because all their inhering powers center in Him who made them, and in His continual working? There is no line of inquiry which, duly followed up, does not end in God, as the cords and bands of a great factory in the power that sets them in motion. Though concealed from view in His own Being, He makes Himself visible in every movement. Blinding as the sun may be to our direct gaze, we cannot mistake its existence.

The union of God's intelligent universe in Him is not so much a thing of reason as of love. "Whom not having seen we love; in whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Love to God is the first and supreme requirement of His law. This is the sole basis of unity in the moral universe, and we know that affection rather than reasoning is the tie that binds men into families and states, and inferior creatures into flocks and herds. The attraction of love in the world of mind does what that of gravitation and cohesion accomplish in the world of matter. It reduces innumerable individuals to a corporate unity. While science accepts nothing which it cannot formulate in thought, God binds both His moral and material universe together by those subtle forces of which we can think only in their effects.

No mistake is greater than thinking to bind Christians in one by legislation, hierarchies or symbols of any kind. The



most that these can effect is an external bond such as unites dissimilar peoples under one government, as English and Hindoos under the British Queen. It is a thing of external power, not of mind, affection and identity of spirit. Such is catholic unity, which is a thing of outward appliances, not of internal working. The Scriptures look for unity on an entirely different principle. It is by "coming into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." It is creative, not formative; of the heart, not of institutions. We are one in Christ, not in an organization. It is like that of nature where innumerable particles are made one universe by ties too subtle for philosophy, too acute for science. It is God working through all and in all. He is the central sun, alike in the world of matter and of mind.

If Christians would let their controversies sleep and come more fully under God's working, they would soon reach a oneness to which their continuance in different sects would be no barrier. The diversity of sect would in that case add to their effectiveness, just as the power of an army is estimated by the number of its divisions under one head. There are a thousand reasons to make these divisions necessary in our present state, but none why all should not be ruled by the same Spirit. It was for a oneness such as exists between Father and Son in the Holy Trinity that our Lord prayed, and not such as being under one pope or ecclesiastical constitution. "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

The new creation of our text has both an earth and a heaven, just as the old creation had; and why, therefore, should not both the old and the new have respect to the revelation of God in man? The New Jerusalem is to come down from God out of heaven, not as a material fact, but a spiritual power ruling the life of man. With this imagery Moses begins the revelation and John ends it with the same. It is heaven and earth as a unit, the kingdom of God with men, or a spiritual nature conjoined to the earthly, that whether living among these material elements or where only spiritual bodies can subsist (1 Cor. xv: 39), they may "stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Toward this highest of all unities the only creative energy known to Scripture has been undeviatingly working ever since the beginning of time.

#### V. THE CREATIVE ENERGY IN ITS FINAL CAUSE OR CONSUMMATION.

The doctrine of final causes cannot be explained from mate-

rial laws. Unorganized nature can furnish no reasons for its operations. It is full of indications of intelligence without intelligence, a vast laboratory without a workman or owner to put it to any use. In itself it shows no final cause or rational purpose for its existence.

And when we rise to organized nature, what have we but brute members, senses and appetites? What is there to appreciate anything in nature beyond a feeding place? The ox and his grass are about alike remote from the evidences of intelligence which surround them. They are mere absorbents, the one of what comes from the earth, and the other of earthly substances themselves. Everything lives out of the ground, and returns to the ground again. And even if we add our intellect of capacity to observe laws, facts, forces or relations as they exist in matter, what more do we gain but a race of lookers on? Scientific men can pretend to little more, except that they are able to combine things for present use and conveniences. They are as completely cut off from God and a spiritual world as the ox or his grass. Prof. Tyndall has said, in a late speech, that he knows of nothing that might not have come from the properties which inhere in matter, and denies the existence of any force extraneous to it. According to this view, there is no higher mind-force than the power of observing what matter is and does.

And yet, who does not know that all the greatest things in human history come from conscience and a sense of the powers above? Thence arose the Pyramids of Egypt, the Acropolis of Athens, the Cathedrals of Europe, and all the greatest monuments of art. Thence governments, constitutions and laws. Thence the martyrdoms of conviction and freedom. Thence the voluntary sacrifice which millions have made of property, limb and life. Thence the controlling power of both savage and civilized minds. Thence the inspiration of poetry, and Homer and Milton would have had their flight in a vacuum if there had been the in human mind no sense of connection with a higher world. Thence moral nature as a sentiment, and not intellect as a knowing, reasoning power, manifests itself in the fetish of the negro as well as in the theology of civilized men. And can a sentiment exist without some sort of objective reality—eyes without light, ears without sound? And yet, blear-eyed science finds all in matter!

But our text looks at the subject from a higher, broader and more reasonable point of observation. "All things were created by Jesus Christ, to the intent that unto principalities and powers among the heavenlies may be known by the Church," or its elevation from an earthly to a heavenly life, "the manifold wisdom of God." The material system is an outcoming of the Infinite mind, and exists for the intellectual, moral and



spiritual. It is the soil in which grow the shoots which are to be transplanted to the paradise above. Millions of just men made perfect began life here, and millions more are to be added. And for aught we know a like process may be going on in the other orbs of immensity, to make the spiritual creation more vast than the material, as God who is Spirit is greater than all his works. Where it is said, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," it must be considered that this ascription of praise is from the four living creatures representing all who are capable of praise, all who know and enjoy God, showing that the end of redemption, as of creation and providence, is to indefinitely multiply beings capable of sharing in the happiness of the Infinite Mind. God's pleasure can only find increase in distribution, as the sun in the worlds reflecting his beams and sharing their life-giving power.

A boundless spiritual universe into which the glory and honor of world-nations are ever flowing, exceeds all our conceptions of material vastness. It is flooded with divinity as seen in clearer visions than here, is radiant with glory, exultant in happiness, and destined to endless progression. This is the new creation and the final cause of all God's works. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."



**The Reformation of the Family.****A DISCOURSE**

BY **Pere Hyacinthe**, DELIVERED IN THE WINTER CIRCUS, PARIS,  
APRIL 22, 1877.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY REV. LEONARD W. BACON.]

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:** The importance of questions affecting the family becomes enhanced in the presence of institutions of popular government. Over against that growing and agitating individualism to which it ought to act as a counterpoise, unless the family represents the force of a wise and liberal conservatism, it becomes the instrument of the most dangerous and obstinate reactions. And if, unhappily, its influence should cease, or rather should decline, for the family is incapable of being wholly destroyed—the order of society would find that its natural foundations had given way, and the impotence of political forces to stand alone would be laid bare to the eyes of all. The question of the family, then, a question of all ages, is peculiarly the question for the ages and lands of popular government.

Now, it is a fact, which unfortunately needs no proof, that the family is impaired everywhere, and, I think, particularly so in our own country. I do well, therefore, to take up the question of its restoration. I did this ten years ago in the pulpit of Notre Dame. My point of view has not changed since then; my convictions have only been developed and strengthened, and I shall speak to you from the same principles, and sometimes with like expressions. Less than ever can I take part with those chimerical, if not perverse minds which propose to better the family by a course of headlong innovation. I hold, on the contrary, that the maxim of Macchiavelli is here peculiarly applicable, that “institutions are to be reformed only by carrying them back to their original.”

What, then, is the original of the family? Is it a sort of legalization by the State and by religion of the baser instincts of human nature? I blush to put the question, but I am forced to do so, because the moral sense of some men is so gross as to make it necessary. If the family were nothing but this, generous souls would turn from it in scorn, and adopt that ancient motto out of Homer, “Live wifeless and die childless.” Christianity has planted itself at quite another point of view, and if it has proposed to exceptional persons in exceptional circumstances the type of absolute asceticism, it has, at the same time, glorified the family, and opened it to all, not as a refuge permitted to the weak, but as a sanctuary consecrated for the strong.



Thus, then, the original of the family, and of marriage which is the basis of it, is not to be sought in those lower planes upon which I do not wish to detain your attention. Shall we find it in fatherhood? Of all the heights of human existence, fatherhood is one of the sublimest. In contemplation of it St. Paul exclaims, "I bow my knees before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom all fatherhood in heaven and earth is named!"\* Fatherhood is a lofty height; but it is not lofty enough. It is not there that the human family has fixed its throne. That, if you will, is its glorious footstool, but not its royal seat.

What, then, is the original of the human family? Doubtless, fatherhood is a fact of capital importance, but it is an extrinsic fact, and consequently does not constitute the inward essence of wedlock. Ask of reason, and you will learn that there is one law of love for persons and another for things. We love a thing for our sake, but a person for his own sake. If fatherhood was the prime and absolute end of marriage, the wife would be lost in the mother, the companion of man would be only a means to an end—a noble and sacred means to the perpetuation of our race, but still a means. Asia would be in advance of Europe, and Mussulman barbarism of Christian monogamy. That be far from us! The family must rest essentially on the disinterested love of two human beings, loving for love's sake, taking each the other for their mutual end, and finding in the unselfishness of this choice the fulfillment of their moral nature. For just as when man loves his God, loves truth, righteousness, absolute and living—for this is God—it is for the very excellence of this sublime object, and yet he receives of Him, out of measure, overflowing, never-failing, the joys of reason, conscience, heart and all His being; just so in wedded love, there is the devotion of each to each, but at the same time they become each the complement and so the felicity of the other. For the man is not humanity; the woman is not humanity; but man and woman are the two fragments, the thesis and the antithesis, if you like the phrase, that unite in the sublime synthesis of marriage, at once human and divine.

The intellect, with the law that governs the relations of person to person—the law of finality and not utility; the heart, with the law that governs all great affections, friendship as well as love, the law of self-devotion; the intellect and the heart both answer us by showing us the essence of the family in that bond, pre-eminently a moral bond, which unites forever in one being a man and a woman.

And now suffer me to interrogate the Bible. I did this in last Sunday's discourse,† and we saw what profound philos-

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\* Ephesians iii: 14, 15. See the Greek.

† On "Respect for the Truth."

ophy is hidden in its neglected pages. We observed the harmonious and progressive development of the material creation up to the unfolding of man, spirit in flesh, flesh in spirit—the crown in this world of the completed work of the creative thought. Now, Genesis tells us also of the creation of woman and the duplication of human nature in its two parts—the masculine and rational, and the feminine and affectional. Genesis carries us back to a scene which it calls Eden.

What wonder that mankind begins in Eden! Understand me at the outset, I do not attempt to define exactly the historical value of the narrative. My reason presents no objection to it, for there must needs, at the origin of species, have been some strange transactions in the world, and miracle for miracle. I like the Bible story better than the hypotheses of some men of science. But I am not unaware that in dealing with the mysteries of the beginning and the end—mysteries beyond the reach of our reason and our imagination, and of all our present faculties—both Genesis and Revelation make use of symbols that are not to be taken literally, lest we belittle the things, not less real but more vast, which the letter unveils to us by veiling them.

I say, then, that for my part I find it no wonder that the Bible story makes man begin in Eden. Is it not thus that all of us begin? Is not man born into the midst of the scenes of nature as into an enchanted garden, whose forms, whose colors, whose perfumes have for his infancy and childhood charms, delights and revelations which by and by he will cease to find in them? Every life has its dawn, its spring-time—dawn and spring-time that seem destined to be eternal. Even until now, life begins with a never-to-be-forgotten dream of innocence and bliss!

Here, then, we find ourselves, with Adam, in Eden. The whole scene shows us that we are in the ideal regions of human stature, and that we have nothing to do with the instincts of a weak and fallen creature. We are in Eden. Human nature stands before us, not finished, but magnificently roughed out, in that being who has retained more especially the name of *man*; and in him the thing that shines most obviously and conspicuously in his face is the power of thought and will. The apostle Paul, unconsciously commenting on Moses, tells us that "the husband is the head of the wife." Behold that dominating and commanding brow! Beneath his penetrating gaze creation is displayed. It appears before him in its noblest works—those that come nearest to man himself—the animals. The lips of Adam move, and he gives them names. There, O philosophy, you see the difference between man and brute—it is found in speech. Let science compare the species to its heart's content, and liken man to the lower beings. Speech remains, not

as a shade of difference, a gradation, but as a great gulf between him and them, for it is the sign and instrument of abstract, free, reflective thought. And not until you shall have succeeded in evoking smiles and language from the sluggish lips of the brute will you have so much as brought near each other the edges of that yawning chasm that separates forever the thinking being from that which cannot think.

Man called the creation by its name; he conceived it; he commanded it. And yet amid all this happiness, despite this power and this intelligence, he was not happy. Adam found no helpmeet for him. His reason was seeking for life; his head was inclining toward his heart. At this point begins the second scene of the drama of creation.

He sleeps a deep sleep. Ah! once again suffer me to exclaim, "Oh, the philosophic depth of the thoughts of Holy Writ!" Come away, my friends, withdraw, like the first man, from this common—I had almost said this vulgar scene, into which we are ushered every morning and in which we abide till evening; this scene which we call the real world, but which is only the apparent world, the world of phenomena, *φαινόμενα*, of passing forms, not of abiding substance, of sensible effects, not of the causes which produce them and which escape the scrutiny of the senses! Withdraw from this waking scene and enter into the slumber of the senses—into that immediate intuition, that deep contemplation, that trance of the understanding and the reason in which we behold the inmost depths of things. "And Adam slept a deep sleep." It was there, at the fountain-head of being, and not in this common world in which we dwell, that the primordial reduplication of human nature was effected for all the coming time.

The woman is not a being alien to the man. She is not to be animated by a breath different from his. She is not to be formed, like him, of lower substances, as of the dust of the earth. She is to radiate from the man like his consciousness, or, as St. Paul says, like his glory. "The woman is the glory of the man."\* She is to radiate from man, but not from his brow—the brow is the seat of thought. Ah! this splendor, this flame, this glory must go forth from the heart. There it is that the story of Genesis shows us its origin. And when the mysterious production is finished, man also is finished, and the Creator, so far at least as concerns this globe, may enter into His triumph and His rest. Man exists now in his completeness—the head, the heart; the heart that thinks in the head, the head that loves in the heart; head and heart, man and woman, united in supreme harmony and bearing a single name. "In the day that God created man, male and female created he them, and

\* 1 Corinthians xi: 7.



called their name Adam—man." Such is this first page of the Bible, to which perhaps you have never given a thoughtful reading. I repeat it: I have no concern with the story, more or less literal, of two individuals. What I discern in it with certainty, with profit, with admiration, is the typical but authentic and revealed history of the moral and religious origin of the family, of society, of all humanity.

It is by the harmonious combination of thought which predominates in man, and affection which predominates in woman—by the union of the head and the heart, which is the condition and the principle of the union of man and woman—that the fair and noble structure of the family is to be reared up. But, mark it well! with this is to be reared the whole structure of society, for society is but the development of the family. For what is the nation but the circle of contiguous homes? What is the nation but the expanded family? How is it that we feel in common that we are Frenchmen? It is that we speak one language and are of one blood; that for centuries we have developed one sentiment of brotherhood, on one territory, watered with the sweat and sometimes with the blood of ourselves and our ancestors. This makes the nation our country—this sense of brotherhood and fatherhood. Fatherland! Land of the fathers and the children! Now, in the fatherland, as in the family, the two great influences meet together—the thinking head, the loving heart—head and heart that are to think, love, act as one; and woe to society when they are separated one from another—when the man's influence and the woman's influence become not only distinct but hostile! Of these two forces one will not destroy the other, for you cannot destroy nature; but they will come into collision in the worst of all civil wars! By every fireside, in every parlor, in the sanctuaries of every church, even in the councils of the State, everywhere you will see the affectional force, the moral force, the religious force—too often darkened and perverted in woman—holding in check and sometimes driving back the scientific, liberal, progressive force personified in man.

And now, from the conception which we have contemplated, let us turn our attention to the actual fact: which is it, unity or variance? Doubtless, the reality is not always the opposite of an ideal state of society. Whatever superficial or unfair observers may think, there is no race on earth in which the family sentiment is as strong as in the French race.

I am not here for an effort of flattery. I am not capable of it anywhere, least of all before this great audience. I am not here for a work of rhetorical art—I make no claims to rhetoric in these discourses. I am here before these free and thoughtful consciences, on a mission of morality and patriotism, while

waiting to be received on a mission of religion. I endeavor to speak here the language of reason and liberty. I set before your consciences my own experiences and convictions. If I had the power to impose them on a single one of my fellow-men, I would not do it. Only hear me, and then judge.

I say that in a part of the society of France—I might say of Europe, but you will understand why I am chiefly concerned with my own dear and glorious country—the spiritual unity of the home is not adequately attained, and that, as a fatal consequence, the unity of society itself is affected. I have said this, and I shall prove it. I shall prove it by considering the family at two principal points—before marriage and after.

Before marriage, here are two children, unacquainted with each other, or, if they have been brought together through neighborhood or family acquaintance, they know nothing of the future that awaits them; and yet they are foreordained for each other. Despite the abuse that certain theologians have made of the term, I believe in foreordination in the order of eternal destinies—that just and reasonable foreordination in which the liberty of man is not overborne by the liberty of God. But leaving aside the mysteries of theological speculation, I believe, or rather I clearly see, each day foreordination in the order of nature. There are plants, animals—fauna and flora—whose place is marked out for them in advance in such a region of the globe, or in such a geologic period. And in another order that seems more modest, but which is really of far higher dignity, there are souls which, whatever they may do, can never be developed apart from each other. Woe to them if they never meet each other, or if they meet amiss! These children, then, are foreordained for each other. How are they prepared for each other? The young man is the head; what needs training in him is those gifts which he has received in greatest abundance—the gifts of intellect; but it is also the heart, for we are always liable to fall on that side toward which we lean, and withal the heart is the point of contact by which, by and by, in the course of moral and domestic development, the man is to come into harmony with the woman.

Now, I ask, does the education which we give to young men nowadays develop, as it ought, the heart and the affections? I put the question, and the answer I get is—science! Now, there is no more proud and jealous friend of science than I, only let it be science complete, not self-mutilated, self-isolated from human life. Science is more than observation and experiment in visible nature—more than the nomenclature of facts. Spirit is not of less account than matter, neither is it less fruitful of diversified and positive studies. Doubtless our young men do study history in connection with the natural and abstract sciences, and it is not for me, amid this circle of illustrious men

whom I see around me, to disparage history; but understand the word in the sense of the great historians, who see through facts to ideas, and through ideas into the soul of a people and into its coming fate. This is history worthy of the name! And can we, in fact, separate the reason from the conscience, the heart, the imagination even? Can we put abstract truth on one side and life on the other? Is it the right and normal course for thought which ought to circulate through the whole human being like a generous blood, when, as if seized with vertigo, it rushes to the brain in a fit of metaphysical intoxication or in a stroke of mental apoplexy? Such science I would none of for our sons. And yet it is to such science as this that they are often condemned for the most noble, fruitful and critical years of youth.

But, I am told, there is religion, which is provided for in the course of instruction and education—this serves as a counterpoise for a too abstract and exclusive science.

Too often religion is presented to the young man under a form or in a spirit which he cannot accept, or can only accept as a family tradition, not to be too closely examined, but not entering into practical life. Ah, well I know that God's truth does not change with succeeding ages or with varying climes. We cannot say it is truth this side the Pyrenees and falsehood the other side. But there are forms of the truth predestined for this country or that, for this or that century, and the form of religious truth needed to-day for cultivated, manly young Frenchmen is not the form that was fitted for the Middle Ages, and which is no longer wanted either in Italy or in Spain.

And so it comes to pass that religion, even when it exists, has a little cell to itself, all closed and dark, in the young man's brain, and does not pass, like a free and all-powerful breath, over his whole life and soul.

But then there is morality. Yes, morality. Gentlemen, in my opinion it is a great mistake to think of religion as the only thing that divides men's minds, and of morality as the one thing in which they are united. If you speak of morality as it is written by the finger of nature in the recesses of our conscience, that morality indeed is one, not two. But this book of the conscience is like all other sacred books—men sometimes find written in it what they want to find. Thus it is that systems of morals vary as much as systems of religion. To point out only the most conspicuous examples, does there not obtain in society, at this very moment, a detestable sophism, accepted, nevertheless, by many persons, that there are two standards of right and wrong, one for individuals and the other for nations?—and among individuals, alas! that there is one standard of right and wrong for men, and another for women?



These are commonplace remarks, I know, but the applause that I hear from you proves that there is need to insist on these commonplaces till they pass out of rhetoric and into the conscience, and out of the conscience into fact. The day must needs come, and if it be not in the calm and glorious evening of the nineteenth century, it must not longer wait than till the peaceful dawn of the twentieth—the day when we may say to nations as well as to individuals, “Thou shalt not lie,” without hearing in reply that, in politics, lying is the lawful and necessary and legitimate weapon of governors and governed.

The day must needs come when we shall not be saying to individuals, “Thou shalt not steal,” while nations are glorying in conquest. And it must needs come to pass that collective murder, unless imposed by hard necessity and sanctioned by sacred justice, shall be branded, not as equally, but as far more flagitious than individual murder!

One law of right and wrong for individuals and for nations! The man that dares respond to this doctrine by a hiss discredits his allegiance both to the law of God and to the Gospel.

I repeat, also, one law of right and wrong for man and for woman. I lay my finger here on the most delicate and the most critical point of the morals of our time. Why is it, when there is only one standard of truth and one standard of justice for man and for woman, that a corrupted public opinion should have two standards of chastity? The woman's fault is held by all to be her ruin—her moral death-sentence. The same fault in a man brings him neither harm nor shame. Too often he glories in it as if his only consciousness of the holy gift of manhood was in the abuse of it. And that mysterious but equal fidelity mutually due between the betrothed, is it not subjected to contradictory and unjust judgments? Where is the young man, in whose bosom still remains some fibres of humanity, that does not demand of her who is to-day his betrothed and who to-morrow is to be his wife the jealous, implacable integrity of all her past life? But are there many that hold themselves bound to reciprocal fidelity? Do not the demands of such a morality—mystical, ascetic—bring to the lips of many a strange, incredulous smile?

You see how it is; morality does not always supply what is lacking in religion as an antidote to an incomplete and perverted science.

Look, now, at this young man—in many respects a noble young man; see him wasted on one side in sensuality, on the other side in abstraction, and yet called to appreciate and understand a heart—and what a heart!—called to love it, to honor it, to cultivate it, even; for it is in actual life as it is in the Bible story, that the woman, before she becomes in the fullest sense the man's wife, must be his pupil and his offspring.

And now over against this preparation of the young man, what is the preparation of the girl? In the seclusion of home, under the eye of her parents, in the intimacy of brother and sister, her heart, perhaps, will bloom alone, like some plant of genial clime that needs no human aid, but only the dew and the sun. But her reason—what culture will that receive?

Hear what Fenelon wrote, in the seventeenth century, in his "Treatise on Female Education": "Nothing," says he, "is more neglected than the education of girls. Everything is decided, in many cases, by fashion and the mother's whim. No one supposes that this sex needs much instruction." Has French society in this century made any very important advance upon that of the seventeenth? Is it quite secure from the strictures which he applied to his own century? He adds, some pages later: "Superstition is certainly a thing to be feared for woman, but nothing is better, to eradicate or prevent it, than solid instruction. Let girls, too credulous as they are by nature, be accustomed not too lightly to admit certain unauthorized legends, nor to devote themselves to certain religious practices that are introduced by an indiscreet zeal, without waiting for the approval of the Church." Fenelon could not have suspected that the day would come when such legends and practices would be approved by those who claim to be the representatives of the Church.

My friends, it does not develop the understanding of young women to drag their faculties to and fro over surfaces which they cannot penetrate. It does not enrich their memory nor elevate their thought to overload them with a mass of undigested facts and notions. What I ask, as a general rule, of the institutions in which they are educated, is this: Are you training up women capable, when the time comes, of becoming partners of a man's intellect, *confidantes* and counsellors of his thought, his reading, his work? Above all, are you giving them a religious belief and practice in which their brothers now, their husbands by and by, can take part without blushing for themselves, and without doing violence to their reason?

These two existences, so little fitted for each other, chance—I cannot bring myself to say Providence—presently brings together. A whim, or a calculation of self-interest—which of the two is the better, or rather which is the worse?—unites them; and on this union is to be built up that sublime trilogy, the individual, the family, society! "But they love one another," you tell me. And you call *that* love, in the true, moral, Christian sense of that great word! You call that love! Because upon this rock without soil, this sand without water, there has sprung up an ephemeral flower, deceitful to the careless eye, but having no brilliancy, no fragrance, no continuance, you declare that they love! Look, then, a few years later, and see what becomes of this union.

The young man has made an effort with himself to get control of his own heart that he may keep his hold upon the heart of his wife. Now, what sort of sequel follows at the end of one of these feverish days of our toilsome and democratic communities, when the man, weary from the conflict with his fellows and with himself, wounded, whether he be victor or vanquished, comes back to his home? "Now," he says to himself, "I shall have two or three hours, at least, of peace—two or three hours that will be like balm to my mind and heart. He sits down at his fireside, and feels quickening within him that which lies deepest in man—deeper than science and politics, deeper than business and the toil and tumult of modern life—the holy aspirations of human nature. He takes upon his lap his youngest child, and the little innocent strokes his face with happy hands—happy because pure. Dear little hands! how they fondle the wrinkles of his brow and the scars of old wounds! and in the breath of his child the father breathes, as it were, a breath wafted from paradise! He listens with delight to those simple but sublime prattlings that are uttered partly in the language of men, and partly in the speech of angels. Then drawing near the lamp whose shade seems to gather up the light and the thoughts, he speaks to his wife, and seeks to evoke from this pure and charming present the solemn but happy visions of the future. But she listens not, or listens only with a pre-occupied mind. Her thoughts are not with his, either on the present or on the future of their children. He opens a book—one of those grand books of history of which I have been speaking—a book of poetry or of philosophy. But poetry, philosophy, history alike divide them. She cannot have any complicity in his reading. He opens the Gospel, and this too they do not understand in the same way. He unfolds the newspaper; they cannot so much as read the newspaper together!

Alas! it is history that I am telling—a page out of the history of France more painful and dreadful than that of our civil discords and our military disasters.

The husband will come back to his home, at first less gladly, afterward less frequently. Then, in place of these visions of innocence and peace, his mind will begin to be haunted by recollections out of his reading or out of his past experience—the courtesans of Athens, the bayaderes of India. At last he will ask himself that fatal question, What is marriage, after all? what does it amount to, this union under a legal contract or a religious benediction, so long as the hearts are divided by an eternal gulf? Ah! my friends, if he be anything less than a hero, he will go on from that point in a course in which we will not follow him.

And now, as to the wife. I might depict her also a prey to



the same enticements, the same mistakes. I will not do it; I prefer to take only the gravest and saddest aspects of the picture. I think of her, then, as making every effort, despite the defects of her education, to bring her own mind and conscience into sympathy with those of her husband. But in her mind and conscience themselves she finds a limit to her good will. For if she has, I do not say superstition, but faith—if she has distinct and settled principles rooted in the soul by which to decide questions of duty and of eternity, and necessarily, therefore, questions of the present life in practice and in detail,—if, I say, in the convictions of her reason and the dictates of her conscience she comes to a barrier that she cannot cross, what is to become of her? Where shall she find counsel in the perplexing questions relating to her own duty or that of her children? Whither shall she turn for light, comfort, strength, in those inward struggles that come oftener to woman than to man, and in which man is her natural and providential helper? She has, I know, received from God these three gifts—purity, tenderness, patience. She loves the more because she is the purer, and she knows how to suffer because she knows how to love. But at last, just because she is under this law of love, she needs support from one that is stronger; she needs, in spiritual matters, to find him who, in these also, is “her head.” If she does not find him in her husband, if he cannot share her religious and moral anxieties, she will seek elsewhere. She will find what she needs in the Catholic priest, or if not, in that other representative of the gospel, the Protestant pastor; and if she does not find him in any of the official ministers of Christianity, she will look for it in some man of religious or philosophic conscience, some man of strength, gravity and purity, whom she will ordain by her prayers and tears to the priesthood of her conscience.

However legitimate this resolution of the woman, deeply misconceived, long and painfully gainsaid, the woman of whom the Scriptures seem to speak under the figure of the captive daughter of Zion, with tearful, backward-turning face, looking toward a past which was but a dream, and which never can return—however sacred the despair of the wife, of the mother, isolated in her conscience, and at the cradle of her child—after this, tell me, what is there left of marriage? The husband possesses nothing but a carcass. His wife’s heart, conscience, soul, are gone from him forever. The education of his children is no longer under his control; for this is the end of the pitiful drama—the moral divorce of the parents is consummated by this divorce in the education of their children. The children are divided. The sons follow the law of the father, the daughters of the mother; or, it may be, each of them will be divided in soul, and the variance which I have shown in the

parents will reappear in the children. Be they sons or daughters, they will retain from this contradictory education—I will not say faith enough, faith is too high and pure a thing for this—but superstition enough never to think freely as long as they live, never to make a strong and energetic decision in view of the great and solemn moments of existence—marriage, suffering, death—superstition enough for this; and at the same time doubt enough never firmly and joyously to believe in the religion which they practice, or at least do not repudiate. So it keeps coming back under all its forms—this variance that is tormenting and dividing us, and, unless we beware, will be the death of us. That is the great enemy of France.

And now, my friends, to point out the remedy. I have had much to say of Christianity; let me lead you, ere we close, to the heathen fireside—which is also ours. Christianity is a synthesis; far from rejecting, it calls to itself all the moral and religious elements of the inferior forms of religion. We are descended not only from Judea, through the apostles and the first disciples; we are descended from the Celts, the Romans, the Greeks. We belong to the old and aristocratic family of the Aryans. Now, in every Aryan region, on the shores of the Mediterranean as well as on the banks of the Ganges, each house had its altar—its real, material altar, and on that altar burned a fire. Woe to the family whose altar-flame should go out, were it only for an hour! Before this altar, cherishing this flame, there stood a man, the father of the family. He is the family priest, who pours the libations, immolates the victims, celebrates the rites, sings the ancestral hymns. And the day when the father—for this name, *pater*, was given to him among the Greeks and Romans even before his marriage; it was a name of honor, of royalty and priesthood—the day when the father would take to himself a companion, he separated her from the altar and the worship of her parents, and introduced her by a solemn ceremony into the house and the religion which she was thenceforth to share with him.

By whom has this altar, the sure defense of the community, been thrown down? Who quenched that flame? Who silenced those hymns? Don't tell me it was Christianity. Christianity has spiritualized everything, but destroyed nothing. The ruin came from another quarter. It is a part of that perilous crisis through which we are passing, and the issue of which no man can foretell. Family religion is no more. There is individual religion; and if you take the members of the family one by one, or the best of them, you will find in the secret sanctuary of the conscience a flame, or at least a spark. But there is no longer a family altar where they pray and sing together, or, if an altar, it is a hidden one, where the mother timidly gathers her brood in

the father's absence. Beware! there are two Christianities; one is manly, the other feminine, or rather effeminate. The second may kill the first, but cannot take its place.

The remedy, my friends, I know it, I offer it to you. Rebuild the family altar! Resume your priesthood! Have the courage to believe, teach, pray, to gather about you your wife and children. But what religion shall I follow, do you ask? Whatever your conscience chooses, were it the most incomplete of all. The poorest of all religions is better than nothingness.

For my part, I would rather the African negro prostrate before his fetish, than the man who has lost all, whether by his own fault or not, and who is groping in the night and stumbling on the brink of the abyss. This fetish is but a dry root or lump of shapeless wood, if you please. But once let a beam of the human conscience gleam upon it—let the radiance and the dew of the revelation from on high envelop it, and the blasted, mutilated wood shall bud like Carmel, and blossom and bear fruit unto the Lord.

Yes, the humblest of religions, only a religion! But the ancient forms of worship, however beneficent they may have been in their time, can never come back again. Neither can we look for new religions to appear. The last evolution of light among men is Christianity. True, Christianity may go on from glory to glory, but it can never surpass itself. Men's conception of it and realization of it may be improved, but it cannot change its nature nor cease to be itself—Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day, forever.

Young men, and you of riper years, husbands and fathers, have, then, a Christianity strong, tender, religious enough to attach to itself your wife and hold your children. Have a Christianity enlightened, manly, progressive enough to abide in it yourselves, believing and practicing it with them.





## **Lazarus at the Table.**

### A SERMON

PREACHED BY Archibald G. Brown, IN THE EAST LONDON TABERNACLE,  
ENGLAND.

*Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.*—JOHN xii: 2.

WAS there ever a more marvelous transformation seen on earth than this presented to our view in the text of to-night? What a perfect contrast it is to all that is recorded in the previous chapter! True, in both pictures there are the same personages, and the leading figures in both are identical; but how different their positions, and how changed their aspects. Prominent in both is the figure of our Lord, yet how altered His appearance. In the first picture we see Him standing, groaning in spirit, with tears running down His cheeks, gazing into an open sepulchre where corruption is doing its work. We hear Him also speaking with a voice that wakes the dead—"Lazarus, come forth!" But here, He is sitting calmly and quietly at the hospitable table of Mary and Martha in Bethany. We see no tears upon His cheeks; we hear no groaning. He is enjoying social intercourse with those whom He loves. Christ is in both pictures, but how different does He appear in the one to what He does in the other. In both we have Martha. She is a prominent figure in that first picture of the eleventh chapter. But then we see her with a countenance betraying in every line the conflict that is going on between faith and unbelief, as she says, "I know that He will rise again at the last day," and then, looking brighter as Christ replies, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." In the first picture we see her one moment looking almost blank with despair, as she says, "Don't roll the stone away. Behold, by this time he stinketh;" but here we find, in the 2d verse, that Martha served. All look of anxiety is gone; she has not even a passing thought about a sealed sepulchre or a dead brother. All she is doing is bustling about, just like her, seeing that her Lord and the companions of her Lord at the table are being well served and amply provided for. The third figure is Mary. We saw her in the other picture. There, poor Mary had her face clouded with sorrow, her eyes red and bloodshot with weeping. She had so often gone to the grave to weep, that when she rises hastily, her friends have no doubt as to the direction of her footsteps, so they only remark, "She goeth unto the grave to weep there." But see her now. She is sitting at the table—no, rather, she was—for now she has risen from the table and

is kneeling down at the feet of her Lord, anointing them with precious ointment. No sign of weeping in her eyes now. Mary's heart is filled up with joy to the very brim. Her dear Lord is happy, and so is she. She could not weep a tear now did she try. But the most marvellous figure, with, of course, the exception of our Lord's, is that of Lazarus. Talk of changes, or of startling surprises. Where will you find anything to compare one moment with this? We saw Lazarus in the other picture, tied hand and foot, and wound round, swathed in grave clothes, lying still as marble, on a stone shelf, and, for aught we know, in companionship with other corpses. But look now! Who is that sitting next to Christ? Can it be Lazarus? Yes, we recognize his face. It cannot be any one else, and yet how can it be he? What, Lazarus of whom Martha said, "Behold, by this time he stinketh!" Is that the same man sitting at the table, talking to Christ, eating the food placed before him, and the very joy of all the social circle? He has a smiling, gladsome face, and his flesh is like the flesh of a little child! Is that the man who was once a corrupt corpse? Yes, for our text says, "Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him."

Now, marvelous though this transformation is, it is not more marvelous—nay, it is not half so marvelous—as changes that are taking place every day. I pray God that such a transformation scene may take place, friend, in thy pew to-night. For, just as we showed you last Sabbath evening that the death of the soul is a more fearful death than the death of the body, because it is the death of a higher part, so the resurrection of a soul from its grave of sin is a more stupenduous miracle than the bringing forth of a cold corpse from a silent grave; and when it can be said concerning any one, "And he who was dead is now sitting at the table with Jesus," we utter one of the most marvelous declarations of divine power that can be made.

We have in our text many things, but we shall only notice three. We have a *great wonder*, a *grand testimony*, and a *mighty power for good*.

I. We have, first, A GREAT WONDER. What a change in the man! One almost fails to recognize Lazarus in the 12th chapter, after we have looked upon him as described in the 11th. Let us see where this wonderful change lies.

And I would remark, first, the most wonderful change of all was *within the man*. Yes, although Martha shuddered at the outward manifestation of corruption, though her eyes went no further than the outside skin, and that made her say "Keep the stone on," the secret of decay was deep within. Inside that silent corpse corruption was busily at work, gradually eating its way out into the sight. Inside that man there was a heart quite dead, and yet fast breeding putrid life. Within

that cold breast there was a heart that had ceased its beating ; stagnant blood filled all the veins ; the thousand strings of the marvelous harp of his being were all snapped and broken ; death was reigning triumphantly, and corruption gradually carrying one position after another, until already it had begun to appear without. Now look at him as he sits at that table. The most marvelous change is not that which the eye beholds outside ; it is that which is within the man. That heart that was dead now swings as steadily as any pendulum. All the thousand and one strings that had been snapped by death have been restored. The blood flows coursing through the veins ; and, right to the very centre of the entire system of Lazarus, life dwells. When Christ said, " Lazarus, come forth ! " that voice of power went right through the deaf ear ; it penetrated to the very seat of corruption. It set the heart moving, the blood flowing, the pulse bounding. It restored all that which had been broken down by death. The man now looks healthy *because of healthy life within*. Is it not so with the man who is spiritually quickened ? God forbid we should say one word which could appear to deteriorate from the importance of the outward manifestation in a change of life. Bless God when the drunkard becomes sober, and when the swearer ceases his oaths, and when the impure man becomes chaste, and the hot-tempered man becomes loving, and the surly disposition becomes gentle. But you must remember that there is a more marvelous change within than anything your eyes can detect without. These things are, after all, only the necessary outcome of that which has been performed within. Inside the breast of that man who was once dead in sin, there now beats a new heart, and I can hear its throb. If you put your ear close to it you will hear that new heart beating, " Christ, Christ, Christ." Every beat of that new heart gives a new sound. There is a heart beating for Christ which was once not only still in death, but was the fountain of all evil and all corruption—a heart that bred every iniquity. Look again within that newly quickened man ; how entirely changed are all the strings of his inner being. His hopes, his fears, his longings, his aspirations, his prayers, his motives, his imaginations, his quiet thoughts—all of them are revolutionized ; the man has been changed *inside*. Oh, sir, do not be too proud of your outward life unless it is the manifestation of an inward change, and then there is no ground for pride, but only praise to God. Thou mayest after all be nothing more than a rouged corpse, simply painted death, ornamented grave-food. Oh, professor, unless there be, as there was in Lazarus, the principle of life imparted, all thine apparent reformation and thine apparent correctness of life is simply worthless ! " Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him." Oh,



wonder of wonders! Oh, marvel of all that is miraculous! But the greatest marvel of all was the inward change which had taken place.

But although the inward change was the chiefest of all, yet we must not overlook that there was a *great wonder to be seen in the outward alteration*. We have no desire so to speak as to make your hearts revolt and recoil from our words as we describe what Lazarus was once like. All we care to say is, that the horrible corruption inside had worked its way out to the surface—that even Martha, with all the love of a sister's heart, was horrified at the very idea of beholding it, and said, "Let the stone stop, for by this time he stinketh." But look at him now. Why, I see Martha, who said "he stinketh," stoop down as she serves, and kiss his forehead. You would not now mind his nursing any one of your children. He is sitting next to Christ; his flesh is as pure and clean as the flesh of any who sit at the table. You can hardly believe he ever was a corrupt corpse. You look at him in astonishment, and fail to grasp the fact that that healthy living man, who is talking and chatting with the Saviour, and turning around and smiling on his sisters, is the very man to whom the Lord said, "Lazarus, come forth!"

But oh, friends! I can show you a more marvelous change than this, and that is the change that takes place in a man's outward life when grace lays hold of him. We can see not a few specimens, thank God, even in this tabernacle this evening. There are not a few who are simply living wonders. May be there has strayed into this tabernacle to-night (which is not a very unlikely thing,) one who is not only ungodly, but who gives most unmistakable proof of it in his every-day life. Have him in your house? You would as soon think of asking the plague to come and be a lodger with you, as to ask him to come and stay beneath your roof. You would not let your children have half an hour's conversation with him for anything. You know he would be sure to contaminate them. Why, the whole man is given up to sin; there is an unholy fire burning in the eye; the conversation is tainted with oaths and impurities. The man's whole life is just a career of licentiousness, and, perhaps, if the hand of the law were to come upon him to-morrow, and put him securely into jail and shut a stone upon him, even a sister might say, "Well, it is about the best thing that could happen; at all events, he cannot corrupt others any more." And it may be that even those who love him best would say, "May the door not soon be opened upon him." And yet—you may stagger at the assertion if you will—let the grace of God meet with that man, let Christ say to him, "Come forth!" and he shall be as changed in life as was ever Lazarus in body; Oh, the alteration that takes place!

What a different light there is in the eye from the old mad fire that used to burn there. His conversation—why, he would sooner die than utter an oath now. All his life is metamorphosed. You look at him astonished, and you say, "Talk about a lion becoming a lamb? Why, it is nothing to what that man has become now; he who was all impurity, now pure, and he who was a dare-devil in sin, now the leader of meetings, pleading with God, taking classes in a Sunday-school." Oh, do you say that is an exaggerated picture? We are drawing from life. Why, thank God, in this place, within the last few weeks, we have had persons bless God for having saved them, who only a fortnight before were fighting in a theatre. We see these things week by week. God does change the life marvelously; and, sir, if your professed grace has not changed your life, it is a lie, and no true grace has been received. Unless there is an alteration without, what matters all you may say about an alteration within. If I had seen Lazarus all corrupt and putrid, and if, when I walked by him, I could smell the stink of death, do you think any argument in the world would prove to me, "Oh, he is really alive, only you cannot see it! He really is alive! There is the germ of life within him, only it has not yet been developed"? No, we should say, certainly it has not been developed. Outward corruption means inward death. Oh, sirs, if grace does lay hold of you, it will make an alteration! "What is conversion?" was once asked of a soldier. Said he, "It is a turn out, and a turn in, and a turn around." It is a turn out when the stronger than the strong one comes, and makes the old inhabitant leave, It is a turn in when Jesus Christ comes and takes up His abode in the heart, which had been like a cage of unclean birds. And it is a turn round with the man; eyes front, where the back used to be turned, that loved which used to be hated, and that despised which was once in highest esteem. "And Lazarus, also," who had once been a corrupt corpse, "Lazarus sat at the table with Him."

You see, then, there was a change within, a change without, and, I will add, thirdly, *a change in his circumstances*. Where was he a few days before? Lying, as far as his body was concerned, unconscious, on a stone slab, shut up in the dark, and, probably enough, in company with other corpses further decayed than himself. Where is he now? He is sitting next to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I think I can see Christ handing him food, and Lazarus handing Christ something; and as they eat together they talk together, and there is fellowship between the two. Oh, do you mark the point? When Jesus Christ quickens a dead soul He communes with him afterward. If He takes a man out of the grave He takes him to His table. If He puts life into a man, He is not ashamed to

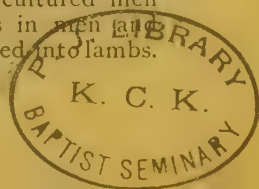
call him brother. Oh, is it not a marvelous change recorded here in the circumstances of Lazarus? But listen, as I quote in your ear the text, "He hath taken the beggar from the dunghill, and set him among princes." The one who was all impurity Christ calls one of His priests; and he who reveled in the gutter in all kinds of filthy iniquities is now one of God's kings, with a crown on his brow, not the less royal because it is unrevealed to the eyes of the world. I bless my Master that when He quickens a soul He does not treat him like a dog. When He quickens a soul He does not taunt him with having once been a corpse. When He saves a man He does not fling it in his teeth, "Ah, think what you used to be! Go, find your companions amidst others, not with Me." Far from it. Christ says to the man who used to be a spiritual corpse, "Now come; sit down with Me; be My friend. Eat off the same table with me. Put your head—that head that used to have the corrupting cheeks—put your head upon my breast. I will talk to you. Do you talk to me." Believer, am I exaggerating? Is it not blessed truth? Has not Christ done that to you? Is not He doing it to you this moment? You and—I who were once dead in trespasses and sins—may it not be said of us to-night that we are among those who sit down at the table with Him? We have often sat at the table with Him on the first Sunday of the month. Oh, wondrous grace of God, that there should be round about His table a great gathering of those who once were corrupt, because dead in sins! There you have a great wonder.

II. For two or three minutes notice that we have in Lazarus A GRAND TESTIMONY, first of all, to the *reality of the miracle*. The Jews were only too quick to try and make nothing of anything that Christ did, and if they could have denied that a miracle had been wrought they would have done so; but they found that facts were stubborn things. What was the good of saying that Lazarus had not been made alive, when they could see him eating at the table? I pray you mark the point. *Jesus Christ is not afraid to let His handiwork be inspected*. If, when Lazarus had been raised from the dead, Jesus had said to him, as in all probability a Romish priest would, "Now go and shut yourself up in a cloister; do not let anybody see you: I have raised you from the dead, but you must not mix among your friends now. Go and live the life of a recluse. Do not let Mary see you, or Martha wait on you, or anybody talk to you,"—and if God had kept him safely locked up somewhere, the Jews would have turned round and said there was no reality in it. "If it is a real miracle, why does not Christ let us see him?" Christ says, "Come and see him, and then judge for yourselves. Take hold of his hand and see whether it is not warm with life; talk to him, and see



whether he will not answer you ; look into his eyes, and see whether there is anything of the glaze of death about them." The live Lazarus is a magnificent testimony to the reality of the miracle. Why does not Jesus Christ take His saved ones right off to heaven at once? Why, because he would lack their testimony on earth, and therefore He says, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Oh, fellow believer, your work and mine is to be a daily testimony, a living breathing testimony, to the fact that Jesus Christ can make dead souls live!

What a magnificent testimony it was to *the power of God's Word!* Who could doubt it after that? Think how all before had failed. If tears dropped at a grave were able to give life to the corpse within, Lazarus would have lived before four days had passed by. Mary often went and wept there, but, however fast her tears fell on that stone, they had no power to put life into the silent form beneath. No matter how often Martha, in her impetuosity, had called Lazarus: her voice availed nothing. But when Christ's simple sentence leaped from His lips—"Lazarus, come forth!" there is the result. Who can doubt the power of Christ's words when there is a live Lazarus to be looked upon? You remember that the Pharisees could say nothing against the miracle of Peter and John, when the man who was healed was standing at their side. There is a great deal of talk in the present day about how old-fashioned preaching is dying out; and the sooner it dies out, they say, the better. The gospel, it is stated, has become effete, a powerless thing. In its place, these clever people suggest a philosophical lecture. "Talk a little bit of science. Have a dash of Professor Huxley in your sermons. Go and tell people what Professor Tyndall thinks about this and the other; try and look learned; have a few novelties sprinkled through your sermons; preach anything rather than Christ;" yes, and then you will be thought to be a clever man, though God writes you down a fool. We are willing to have a preached gospel judged by the results that follow. Show us that philosophy will raise dead Lazaruses, and we will try to philosophize. We dare to throw the gauntlet down, and say, "Now, philosophy, pick it up if you can. Show the same results by your words, as we can show by the preaching of Christ. Now, science, show us the dead men that you have raised to spiritual life. Show us, indeed, your reformatations. They are not many. Show us your impure men that have become pure. Let us see the happy homes that have been conjured up like the wizard's palace through the talking of your cultured men and polite infidels. Let us see the alterations in men and women. Show us your lions that you have turned into lambs.



Show us your angry, vilely living men that you have made chaste and noble and honorable. Where are they?" All that this wisdom of the world can do is to bark like a cur at the gospel. It can do nothing else. It has no power to reach the masses. But, do any say, "Where is the proof that your gospel is true?" Why, we say, "There, there, there, all around this tabernacle!" There is the proof of it. Every saved man is a proof that the gospel we preach is in accordance with God's mind, for whilst God uses the preaching of Christ to the conversion of men, we want no better demonstration that the preaching of Christ is according to the mind of God. Every saved man is a magnificent testimony to the power of Christ's word.

III. Lastly, here was a MIGHTY POWER FOR GOOD. If you look at the 10th and 11th verses of this chapter, you will see where we glean this thought from: "The chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death, because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus." I think this is one of the most beautiful bits of the whole of this inspired narrative. Here you have a Lazarus, who was once dead, being the means of bringing many other people to Jesus Christ; and he who was once a corrupt corpse is the means of leading numbers to the Lord Jesus, who gave him life. I do not wonder that the Pharisees wanted to put Lazarus to death. He was too good an advertisement for Jesus. All the people flocked to have a look at the man who was once dead and was now alive. All kinds of people, who did not care about Jesus, would come just to touch Lazarus, and see whether he was all right. They would take hold of him by the hand, and try whether he actually was alive. And then they argued and said, "Well, whoever can make such a wonderful change as this in Lazarus must be worthy of our faith;" and so Lazarus became the means of the conversion of many souls. God preaches through lips that were once dead, and all God's servants are those who were once found in the graves; and those who are now the angels of the churches are those who were once dead in sins, and of whom, perhaps, their nearest relatives said, "By this time he stinketh."

A word to you who think you cannot do much for Jesus Christ. It may be you are troubled because you cannot preach, and grieved you cannot speak in public, and you feel that your sphere is such a little one. I do not know whether Lazarus could preach or speak. We do not read that he was at all an Apollos. Perhaps all that Lazarus did was to sit still and let the people look at him. He was a sermon. There was not much need for him to say anything. Lazarus did not have to keep calling out all the day, "I am alive; I really am alive! I profess to be alive!" When people are alive they need not tell

everybody so. There will be the mark of life in the flush of health that is upon the man. Dear friend, it is not necessary for you to preach with the *lip*. Preach with the *life*. Be a live man in everything you do. Let the world see the proof of godliness within the heart, by every day's quiet living for God, and your life will not have been spent in vain. If an outside world sees a hasty spirit changed into a long-suffering one, if an outside world beholds a sulky temper turned into a gentle one, the world will mark the wondrous change; and when your head is placed beneath the sod it shall be found that you have not lived in vain; for many who marked the proofs of spiritual life in you, shall be led by those proofs to come and trust in Jesus.

Am I speaking, to-night, to one who thinks he is hopelessly gone—a sinner of the blackest sort, who has strayed in here? Well, sir, we thank God to see you here. We thank God that, at least, the stone is rolled away. God forbid that we should ever get so wonderfully respectable as we worship here that we cannot allow and even rejoice to see the off-scouring of the earth come in. If they cannot find any other seat, we will be right glad to let them have this chair. We want, as George Whitefield said, we want even the devil's castaways in here—those who are so bad that the devil himself could not make them much worse—those who are reeking with filth, and corrupt in iniquity. Now we say to the deepest-dyed sinner in this place, you are not too far gone for God to save. Do you say there, from the furthest part of the building, “Ah, sir, but I killed poor mother. She died of a broken heart through me.” Well, perhaps your moral life did so stink that your mother died of grief under its horrible influence; but God has only to say, “Lazarus, come forth!” Make the worst of yourself you can; paint your case never so black; yet, as the Lord of Hosts liveth, we declare there is salvation, full, free, present, for you, to be had this night by simple trust in Christ. May God the Holy Spirit, who is here this evening, speak now until your sepulchre rings with his voice—“Lazarus, come forth!” and it may be said of you, in the last great day, when all are assembled round the table of the marriage supper of the Lamb, “And Lazarus also who was dead is one of those that sit with Him.” God grant it may be so, for His name's sake. Amen.



**Worship—Its Value in Its Use.****A SERMON**

BY **Rev. M. C. Julian**, PREACHED IN THE TRINITARIAN CHURCH, NEW BEDFORD, MASS.

*And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say ?—Luke vi: 46.*

THERE are three factors in the history of man on earth. One is human nature, the second is environment (as outward circumstances are nowadays called), and the third is God, or the spiritual forces acting on both. The history of philosophy on earth is the attempt to harmonize these three factors. In the attempt to effect this reconciliation various systems of philosophy have been created. And these systems may be grouped in two great classes: those which admit all three, and those which deny or ignore one or other of the three. For each of these three factors—man, circumstance and God—have been barred out by single systems. Thus the fatalist ignores man, the idealist circumstance, and the atheist God. And all three philosophical schemes are shallow, because their authors were blind to the fundamental facts of life. There is more even of philosophical acumen in saying, "I do not know how to harmonize them," than in shutting our eyes to a fact in order to force a harmony. Now, these three factors in human history correspond to the three elements of human nature—mind, matter and spirit. Environment is mainly material. We work on this principally with mind, but on mind itself work the spiritual faculties. I have no new philosophy to present you to-day, nor even any old one. My purpose is not a *philosophical*, but a practical one. Yet I have stated the matter in this way in order to make the fact conspicuous, that in human nature and in history (which is human nature manifested) there are not only the material and intellectual factors, but the spiritual also. And so, when one looks back on human history at large, and considers how many philosophical systems have been wrought out patiently year by year and century by century, with hundreds of eager minds bent to the task; and how many religious systems have been builded up, each esteeming itself the nearest right; and how many conflicts and revolutions and overturnings there have been, consequent on the contact of these various systems with each other—it awakens sentiment and suggests lessons to us differing according to the peculiarity of our own temperaments or surroundings, or the prevailing impulse at the time. And the one which I would suggest to you for my purpose in this discourse is, that whether

any one of these systems be true or false, or whether (as seems more likely) *each* has elements of truth and falsehood above and behind all questions as to the systems themselves, they are each and all the exhibition of what may be called the religious instinct of human nature. The creed, the theology, the philosophy (in its limited sense) is just the outward expression of an inner force in human nature. Men may ignore or deny or oppose religion; and even if it were possible that there were no God or soul, no life beyond death, no foundation in outward fact for the moral sense, nevertheless you could not then destroy religion until you had first destroyed man. IT IS IN HUMAN NATURE. You can curse the churches, revile the creeds and damn the meetings, nevertheless you have got to annihilate yourself before you can escape the fact that you have the same spiritual instinct that everybody else has, and that your very curses are themselves but a perverse use of spiritual faculties. And, more than all, though you destroy this creed or that, disintegrate this church or that, you have not lessened one whit the exercise of the creed-making and church-building impulse of human nature. IT WILL go on. You or I can't help it if we would. It is just *conceivable* that the physical sense of *sight* in the race could be destroyed, that all men should eventually be born blind. But you can't do that to the SOULS of men, while on *earth* at least the *worst* that could be done would be to make them spiritually cross-eyed, that is, to *distort* the soul's sight. Let every church be razed to the ground and every sacred book destroyed, yet, generation after generation, some men would go on worshipping and others blaspheming.

You will remember the old story of Canute or Knut, the first Danish king of England, how he had his chair of state placed on the shore, and having seated himself therein, stretched out his sceptre over the sea and commanded it to roll back. But the waves rushed far up on the beach instead, and compelled king and courtiers to scamper away for their lives. You remember, too, how Xerxes, enraged at the sea for having in a storm destroyed his temporary bridge across the Hellespont, had the waves beaten with chains. The stories are, perhaps, apochryphal, but they are fair similes of the folly of those who try to shut their eyes to the fact of the spiritual instinct in human nature and human history, of which church and ceremonies and symbols and creeds are but the outward exhibitions. Years ago a Massachusetts poet wrote:

"Now at Xerxes and Knut we all laugh, yet our foot  
With the *same* wave is wet that mocked Xerxes and Knut;  
And we all entertain a sincere private notion  
That our 'Thus far!' will have a great weight with the ocean."

And therefore I say that the man who ignores the instinct of worship in human nature is really more shallow and superfi-

cial than even the rude, uncultured man whose image of God is flawed and streaked and spotted with his own coarseness and vice. For the germ of truth is there, which is wholly lacking in the philosophy of the other. To look back on human history, and to note how the stream of human worship has flown on in spite of all the attempts of men and kingdoms to check its progress, brings to mind Tennyson's well-known and suggestive idyl of the "Brook":

"I wind about, and in an out,  
With here a blossom sailing,  
And here and there a lusty trout,  
And here and there a grayling;  
And here and there a foamy flake  
Upon me as I travel,  
With many a silvery waterbreak  
Above the *golden* gravel.  
And draw them all along, and flow  
To join the brimming river,  
For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever."

It is worship, therefore, that is my theme this evening, and I know no subject more practical, more directly affecting human life for good or evil, according as the sentiment which inspires it be high or base, according as the spring from which it flows be pure or soiled. As the centuries roll along, the ten thousand times ten thousand forces at work in the world—material, intellectual and spiritual—crossing and recrossing each other, dividing and multiplying, harmonizing, antagonizing and diverging, will continue to build up and pull down in the future systems and institutions, forms of statement and of application; but however barred by bridges, impeded by vegetation, crossed by mill-dams, twisted by obstructions or shattered by falls, the great stream of the united worship of human hearts will still flow on. And in the ages to come, as I would do this very Sabbath evening, men watching the signs of their own times will point out to the world the *value* of pure worship, and likewise warn men of the *dangers* which lurk in spiritual exercises as in everything else.

God only knows how the FORMS may change, but men must cease to be *men* before the FACT will be destroyed.

The words of the text are taken from Christ's "Sermon on the Mount," as it is called. Jesus spoke the words evidently to warn the people concerning the danger of the abuse or false use of worship, having in mind particularly the evil so prevalent and conspicuous in that very land and day of the formalism and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. In Matthew's gospel the words are more fully given. In the text Luke condenses it all in the brief question, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Now, this text, and kindred ones in Scripture, are often seized



upon by superficial minds as an argument to prove the uselessness of what is called "religious profession," or the spoken witness of one's desire and resolve to serve the Lord Jesus. As Matthew gives Christ's words, they are, "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." Certainly it requires an amazing ingenuity to distort the words "not every one" into "no one." Or to harmonize any such foolish doctrine with the same Christ's solemn statement, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven."

There is a vast difference between condemning the worship which lies no deeper down than the mere passing emotions and the condemnation of *all* worship, all *outward acts* of God's praise. The abuse of forms of worship no more proves the evil of their use than the abuse of pleasure proves its wickedness. It was against the *abuse* of worship that these words of Jesus were uttered. The trouble with much of the controversy between sects who vary in their forms of worship, as also between those who defend and those who attack the creeds of churches, is that both parties are apt to be very superficial in their manner of looking at the question. Creeds and rites are both forms—the creed is the intellectual and the rite is the physical form; both are necessary to any profitable worship, and yet neither of them are that worship itself. So that when the eager defender of a ritual and the enthusiastic disputant on the philosophy of religion come to me with their arguments for or against this or that ceremonial and this or that religious concept, I say to each, "Dig deeper! Neither question is the important one." To speak frankly, brethren, the more I know of human nature and the more closely I study men, the more convinced I am that the bigoted ecclesiastic and the zealous liberalist are really more alike than unlike. The one man is fighting over a matter of institutions, and the other over a matter of ideas. Both institutions and ideas are useful in worship and in spiritual culture, but neither of them are religion. Some of the most formal men I have ever known were men who repudiated *all* rites and ceremonies, and some of the most superficial and bigoted men I have ever known were men who called themselves liberals in religion. And therefore I believe that men need to be warned against the spiritual peril of laying too great emphasis on their tastes concerning the *forms*, or their speculations on the *ideas*, of what the world calls religion.

In considering the real value of worship—(whether private or public, though the latter is my special subject to-day)—we must search deeper than either forms or ideas if we would find the true tests. I think we come nearer to the proper principles of measurement when we keep in mind these three truths:

First, that the value of worship is based not on the *forms* themselves, but on the spiritual *needs* of the worshippers. Now, I have already said that forms are necessary to any worship which is to be of real spiritual use to men. Whenever I hear a man say that he feels himself lifted above this necessity, or that forms are only necessary for the feebly developed, I set him down as a fool. And still further would I go in this matter of emphasizing the value of forms in worship—for I believe it to be an exceedingly important matter to discriminate between different *kinds* of forms. You will understand, of course, that when I say "forms," I include not only liturgical rites, but the *intellectual* forms of worship—ideas, sentiments, creeds and the like. And yet there is a matter more important than the forms—it is the spiritual use we put them to. So much more important is this that it is possible for men with the poorest forms—of rite or creed—to worship more truly, because more spiritually, than men who lack the spiritual desire and purpose, with more beautiful rites and larger conceptions of religion. So that, when sects and parties and institutions are compared, the man who distinguishes between them, or chooses which side to stand with, by such tests as the forms they use or the intellectual ideas they advance, is an exceedingly shallow man—even though he hold repute as a scholar. After all, merely intellectual culture is not very profound. I believe I know men who are very limited in knowledge and very narrow in their views and judgments who are really profounder than many who are learned in books and trained in logical thinking. The spiritual nature has depths which the intellect can only reflect, as the measurable sea does the illimitable vault of heaven. It is to the *spiritual use*, then, that we must look as the final measurement of the value of any form—physical or intellectual. In January, 1852, when the British captured Rangoon, there was a strange prayer-meeting held in one of the Buddhist temples there. All about the spacious apartment stood the grotesque images of their saints and deified teachers, and in the lap of each a lamp was set, to light the worshipping assembly. The crudest rites and the narrowest ideas known in civilized lands would seem far better forms and means of worship to us than those grim statues—yet there might be a use even for these, and that to a Christian assembly. And I think this a true illustration of the principle I have stated, that the value of worship is based not on the forms themselves, but on the spiritual needs of the worshippers. While there undoubtedly is a choice between forms, the really important question is, "Do we make them, whatever they are, *light bearers* to us? Do they *brighten* our worship?"

And the second truth which we ought to bear in mind in regard to worship is, that the value of its forms is to be meas-

ured not merely by the feelings excited, but *essentially* by the *purpose* we put them to. Now, emotion has a most important place in worship. If I did not earnestly believe so, I would not stand in a Christian pulpit. Experience has taught men that, so far as the great general fact is concerned, there is a direct connection between spiritual desire and emotional impulse. But experience also has taught us that emotion may be produced by lower and sometimes unworthy causes. It is even possible to produce emotion in one's self by *intent*, PURPOSELY ignoring any true spiritual desire—for emotional excitement is largely the product of temperament, while spiritual desire is wholly the product of character. That impulse of the spiritual nature *manifests* itself through the emotions, as one great channel; yet that excitement finds its value only in the *source* from which it proceeds. So while I earnestly commend the importance of emotion in worship, I would yet *more earnestly* warn you against the danger of looking no deeper than your feelings in worship. The shallowest part of worship is the outward rite, the next nearest the surface is the intellectual ideas suggested, below that are the emotions excited, and beneath all else (the final and essential test of its value) is the *spiritual experience*. What sort of work would the best sewing-machine ever manufactured do if there was no thread in the needle? You can drive the wheel, and the needle would do *its* part of the work assiduously; nevertheless, when you have finished the seam, you would merely have punctured the material—the *appearance* of the seam would be there, but not the *reality*. And when men or women with a mere taste for emotional excitement go to church, or study and discuss religious questions, or engage in any of the visible acts of organized religion on earth, they may think themselves religious, or believe that they have joined in worship, when the truth is the spiritual thread has been wholly lacking—they have merely been setting the *machinery* of worship at work.

And the third truth to be borne in mind is that the value of worship is based not on its use to *God*, but to *men*. No man whose spiritual nature is large and high enough to understand what the nature of sin is—(a fact which seems to be hidden from many a man of brains and culture, and revealed to many a man who lacks both intellectual strength and education)—will dispute the statement that the best man or woman of us all owes a debt to God which no amount of loving service can ever repay—for the gift of pardon through the Redeemer and the privilege of communion with the Father. But the very nature of that gift and privilege is evidence that God is not one who exacts worship as a matter of *pay*. It will do for *us* to stir up our *own* hearts with love to God, to remember the debt of gratitude we owe Him; but it will never do to impute to *Him*



any such sentiment in our worship, or else we fall back into the sad error of all the old Pagan religions, that God is one who gives gifts to men *for a return*—that worship is spiritual coin with which to buy favors from Heaven. Even were our worship sinless in sentiment and faultless in forms, how utterly poor and meagre a thing it would all be measured by the *gifts* we have received from the *Divine* hand, or by the *nature* of Him to whom it is offered! Nay! we worship God—if at all—not to pay Him back, but because we cannot *help* it. We praise Him—if at all—only because the full heart breaks out crying—"O, my Father, my Father, Thou art glorious beyond all that I can express!" "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits." God is beyond all need (in the gross sense of *barter*) of our worship. Yet in the higher sense of the necessities which love—His very nature—imposes, God *does* need our worship. He needs it as a true father on earth needs obedience from his little child—not that the child's help makes him any the richer, but because the child himself is being trained by such exercises to grow larger and nobler. And the father's sympathy with and love for his child, makes that little one's good the *father's* joy likewise.

The story has come to us of the great Alexander, that one day he ordered a poor Macedonian soldier to drive a mule laden with gold before him to the royal tent, and that on the way the beast fell with his load, so that the soldier was compelled to take it on his own shoulders. But the way was long, the burden heavy, and the man's endurance failed him. He was sinking to the ground, when the King put new life and nerve into him by shouting, "Friend, do not be weary yet; try and carry it to thy tent, for it is all thine!"

And when the way of Christian service grows toilsome—as in the weakness of the flesh, the temptations of life and the pressing necessities of the world it is very likely to become at times to any one—it is a noble kind of selfishness which quickens us with the remembrance that the value and amount of the burden is also that of the reward. Worship ought not to be burdensome; but worship in the larger sense of service to God does actually become so at times to us. And we much mistake the nature of our Heavenly Father and of the true meaning of worship if we suppose that in the direct sense our words or acts are helping Him for His *own* sake. To test the value of any form of worship, then, we are to consider its fitness to meet *our* needs, not God's.

Keeping these three truths in mind, then, that the value of worship is primarily based, not on its forms, but our needs,—not on our feelings, but our spiritual purpose,—not on its use to God, but to us,—we may wisely guard ourselves from the ever-present temptation and danger to *abuse* the forms of worship

instead of *using* them as spiritual helps. Superstition, that foul mother of oppressions, is born of that abuse. Credulity never helps religion, even in its organized and visible forms on earth. It has ever been one of the worst *foes* of true religion—one of the greatest obstacles in its path. And when a man looks to the FORMS of worship only, whether rite or creed, and ignores its invisible spiritual nature, where all its *real* value resides, he throws himself open to superstition. It matters not which side he takes, for there is a superstition of *negatism* as well as the *positive* kind. And, frankly, I see little difference between a credulous, priest-ridden fool or a man who *wholly ignores* spiritual things—the one is the victim of his own imagination, and the other of his reason; and many mental philosophers put the imagination as the higher faculty of the two.

Hypocrisy in worship, also, is ordinarily merely the result of the abuse of worship. Very few men, comparatively, *set out* to be hypocritical in worship. Most persons who become such do so *gradually*, and the road they all take is that of confining (not the mere thought so much as) the moral intent to the rites and ideas, instead of using both these simply as spiritual helps. Crystallography is the science of determining the difference between minerals by the forms in which they crystallize. Every mineral has its *own* form—one is a cube, another a hexagon, and another still more complicated in form. So that a man read in the science could determine the name of a specimen, without regard to its color or clearage, or any other test, by merely learning its shape. This is the *general* law. Yet there are formed in nature what are called pseudomorphs, or false crystal forms, which make the other tests necessary. These are the result of peculiar circumstances, as when one mineral in the lapse of ages has very gradually disintegrated, and another mineral carried in solution has as gradually been deposited, atom by atom, in the place left vacant in the rock by the first. As a consequence, the last mineral, whatever its own *proper* crystalline form, filling the place of the other as if in a mould, takes on the form of the mineral it has *displaced*. Every mineral collection has specimens of this phenomenon. Now, something analagous to this is true in the experience of worship abused. A man may come to church at first with the spiritual purpose, and if he suffers *that to decay* and dwells on the mere *externals* of worship—the rites, or the teachings and ideas—he fills the void with these outward matters, till at last, grown formal by degrees, he finds himself a hypocrite—a moral pseudomorph. Morbidity is another danger in the abuse of worship. Losing sight of the end of all true worship (our spiritual culture), almost unconsciously we drift into artificial ways of thought and feeling in re-



spect to religion. No worship is pure and inspiring that is not fresh-hearted. We worship the God that built the rugged mountains and the roaring seas, and the worship that is not in tune with nature is somewhere out of joint. The songs of the sanctuary ought to burst forth like the breeze that breaks the sea into white caps and surges through the pine tops on the mountains. The prayers of God's children ought to rise like the birds, heavenward—free of wing and singing joyously. The Christian heart ought never to grow old. Every hoary head ought to have a child-heart beneath it. This is what the Master meant when He said, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings God has perfected praise."

And finally, moral obliquity—the distortion of conscience and of spiritual sight and appreciation—is a danger to which every man subjects himself who makes his worship a question merely of rites, or of doctrines, or of religious ideas, orthodox or otherwise, it matters not which. An old writer (Spencer) quaintly says, "Most of our churches have two doors. Superstition crept in long since at the one, and profaneness at the other." And I think there is much wisdom in the statement, not only for *his* day, but for *ours*. There are these two abusers of worship, standing at opposite poles apparently, but in reality one—those who, seeing the *forms only*, regard them with slavish superstition, and those who, equally ignoring the one thing for which all religious things so-called are ever used, their *spiritual* purpose, treat creed and rite with a narrow, conceited nonchalance that is as bad an abuse as the other.

On the fact of the spiritual nature in man, *outranking* both the physical and the intellectual, stands or falls all worship. I protest, therefore, against *both* extremes of its abuse—the slave of formalism or the equally blind negatist. It is in the very *nature* of man to use forms in worship. Ideas and acts of praise to God are our only ladder of communion with Him. And because I love these things for their *use*, I warn you against the danger in which stand both the bigot and the liberalist so-called.

What is meant by the phrase, "*the worship of the heart*," is the spiritual purpose and desire back of the outward forms and ideas of worship. Do not merely gather the fruit for an hour's pleasure on the Sabbath, but take the whole tree, that you may have the *life power itself* from whence comes all the fruit.

Or else we are yet to hear the Master's voice rebuking us with the question, "Why call ye me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things which I say?"